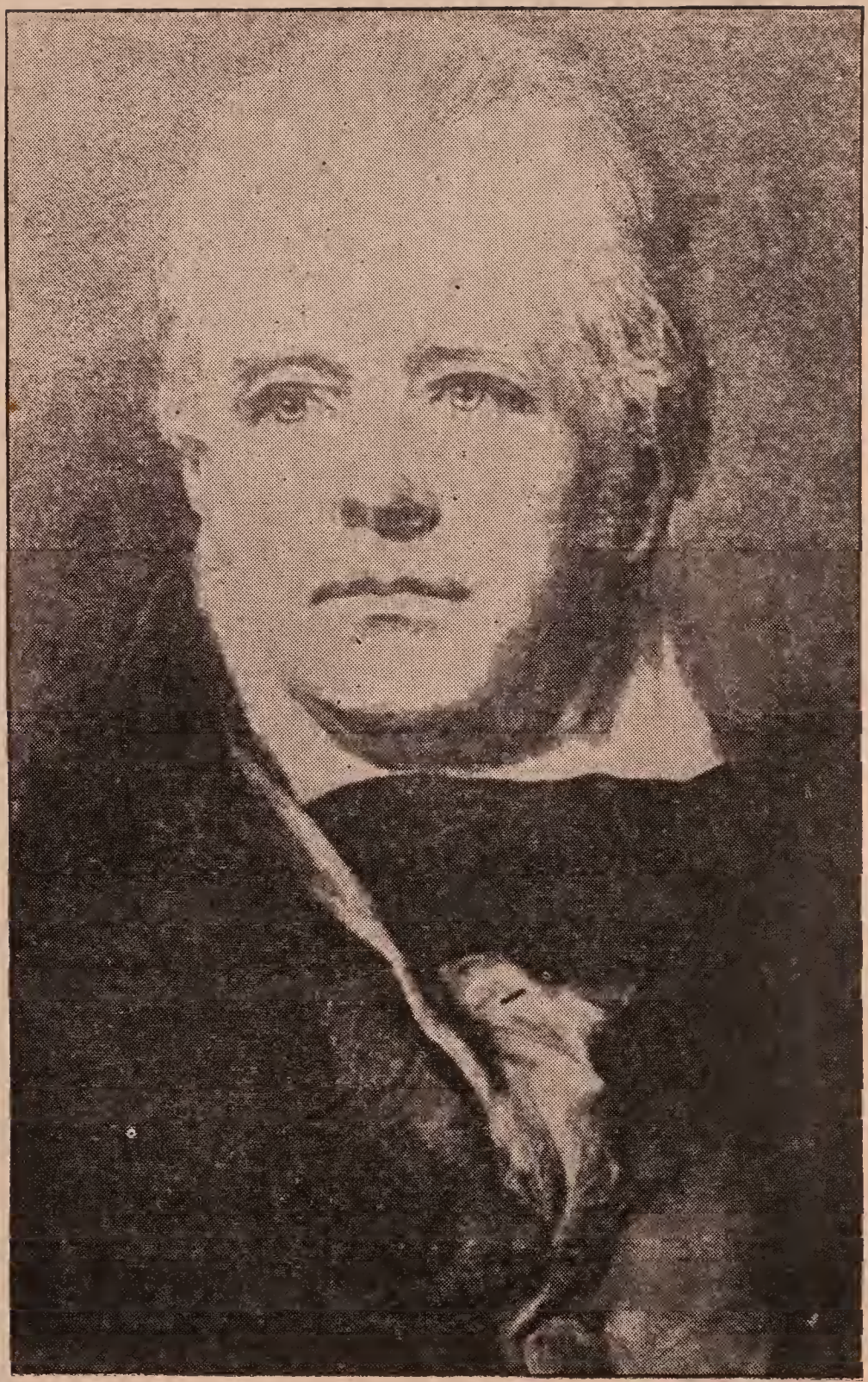
The Lady of the Lake

Sir Walter Scott



SIR WALTER SCOTT

THE WESTERN SERIES OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN CLASSICS

The Lady of the Lake

By

SIR WALTER SCOTT

EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

BY

GRACE E. JENCKE

Head of the Department of English
Southwestern Teachers' College

HARLOW PUBLISHING COMPANY
Oklahoma City
1926

CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

Sir Walter Scott was excellently fitted to write the type of poem which he has given us in *The Lady of the Lake* as can easily be seen in the following brief biography.

He was, as he tells us in his *Autobiography*, the descendant of several characters well known in Scottish legend, among them his father's grandfather, Walter Scott, known in Teviotdale by the surname of "Beardie," a name given him because of "a venerable beard which he wore unblemished by razor or scissors, in token of his regret for the banished dynasty of Stuart." "Beardie" was the second son of Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn, who was the third son of Sir William Scott, and the grandson of Walter Scott commonly called in tradition Auld Watt of Harden. "I am therefore," says Scott, "lineally descended from the ancient Chieftain, whose name I have made to ring in many a ditty, and from his fair dame, the Flower of Yarrow—no bad genealogy for a Border minstrel.'"[1]

Early environment was, however, probably a far more important contributing factor in awakening his love for the stirring tales of Highlanders and Borderers[2] than was his heredity. Scott's grandmother, in whose home he spent much of his early childhood, and in whose earlier life the old Border raids were a matter of early tradition,

---

[1]The quotations from the *Autobiography* were taken from those given by Lockhart in his *Life of Scott.*

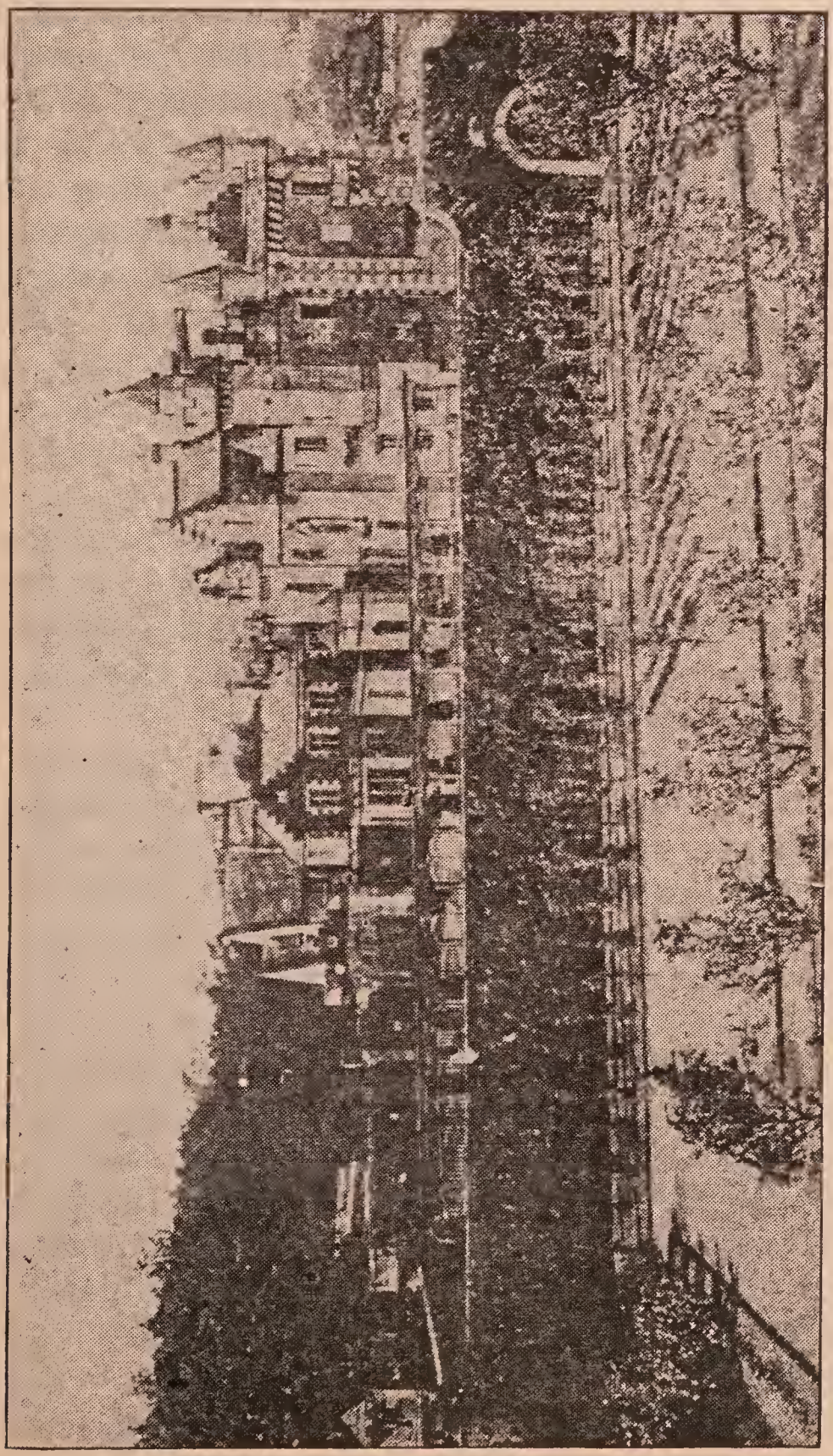
[2]See "A Lesson in the Historical Background."

used, as he says, "to tell me many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie of Telfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes,—merrymen all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John." His aunt, Miss Janet Scott, of whom he speaks often in the *Autobiography*, read patiently long passages until he could repeat from memory certain lengthy ballads. Later, it was his mother who encouraged and fostered in him his love of reading.

The fact that Scott early became lame and that the lameness continued throughout his life is at least partially responsible for his spending so many hours in reading and for his acquiring the marvelous fund of legend upon which to draw later for his writings.

From the time of his birth, August 15, 1771, until he was about eighteen months old he showed every sign of health and strength. But at that time he became ill, the illness resulting in the loss of the power of his right leg. On this account he was sent to live at the home of his grandfather in the country. When he was four, still in an effort to improve his health, his aunt took him to Bath. It was there that his formal education was begun at "a day school kept by an old dame near our lodgings," says the author, in the *Autobiography*, "and I never had a more regular teacher, although I think I did not attend here a quarter of a year." From Bath, he returned to his father's home in Edinburgh and later to his grandfather's at Sandy-Knowe.

When Scott was eight years old, another at-



ABBOTSFORD

tempt was made to improve his health, this time by sea bathing at Prestonpans. After his return from this place, he lived, for the most part, at his father's home in Edinburgh, at first finding it difficult to make the adjustment from being the only child in his grandfather's home to being one child in a large family of brothers and sisters.

He attended the grammar school or high school of Edinburgh where he excelled only in certain types of scholarship, "glancing," as he says, "like a meteor from one end of the class to the other."

After remaining in school for six or seven years, Scott entered his father's office to study law and was enrolled in the law classes of the University. In 1792, he passed the examinations and was admitted to the bar.

His real interest lay, however, in literature, and, after nineteen years of not too-satisfactory practice, he succeeded in receiving certain small legal offices which gave him sufficient income to enable him to direct his attention to literature. His first works were translations from the German. *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,* in three volumes, appeared in 1802-3. In 1805 came his first original production, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.* This poem met with success from the start and was followed by *Marmion* in 1808 and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810. Scott now became famous as a poet and decided to discontinue his legal work altogether in order to give all of his time to poetry.

It was not long, however, before he discovered

that there was another field of literature upon which his enduring fame was to be built. The poems, *Rokeby*, *The Bridal of Triermain*, and *The Lord of the Isles*, which followed the first three, were not successful. Scott now began experimenting with the historical type of novel. *Waverly* appeared in 1814. Its success was immediate and very great. Soon there followed *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, and *The Heart of Midlothian*. In 1820, *Ivanhoe* appeared, the first of the English historical romances. It was followed by *The Fortunes of Nigel* and *Peveril of the Peak*, and *Kenilworth*, all of which have their backgrounds in the history of England; by *Quentin Durward*, dealing with French history; by *The Talisman*, chronicling various events of the Crusades; and by a number of other less well-known works.

The latter part of Scott's life was not happy. In 1810 he had unfortunately entered into secret partnership with the firms of Constable and the brothers Ballantyne, his publishers. The following year he bought the estate of Abbotsford on the Tweed. To maintain Abbotsford required large sums of money, especially after its owner was made a baronet in 1820. One of Scott's few weaknesses was shown when he tried by lavish entertainment to live up to the dignity of his estate and title.

In 1826, the Ballantyne firm failed. Scott was only a silent partner but here his real nobility showed itself, for he assumed the responsibility

of paying the half-million dollar indebtedness rather than have the creditors suffer. When he took upon himself this burden of debt he was already fifty-five years old and his health was seriously impaired. His wife, Margaret Charpentier Scott, to whom he had been married on Christmas eve of 1797, died shortly after the failure.

Always a prolific writer, having produced for some time an average of nearly two novels a year, Scott now redoubled his efforts and in two years had paid approximately two hundred thousand dollars of the debt. Had a few years of health been granted him, it seems almost certain that he would have discharged the entire indebtedness.

A trip to Italy was undertaken in 1832, at the expense of the British government, in an attempt to improve his health. He spent several months abroad, but little improvement resulted. He returned to Abbotsford—which his creditors had refused to accept when he offered it—and there on September 21, 1832, he died. One of his last speeches to John Gibson Lockhart, his son-in-law and biographer, is significant: "My dear, be a good man,—be virtuous,—be religious,—be a good man. Nothing else will give you comfort when you come to lie here."

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. Basis for the Story

Is the Story True? This is usually the first question which arises in the mind of the reader of historical poems or novels. *The Lady of the Lake* deals with a distinct period in the life of James V. of Scotland, and it has a considerable background of facts. The events of the story are, however, for the most part, fictitious. The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary uncle of a historical character, Archibald Douglas, sixth Earl of Angus, under whose tutelage the young King was held for some time. Roderick Dhu, the outlawed chieftain, is also fictitious, but he is truly typical.

Notwithstanding the fact that the events are largely imaginary and the characters are created by the author, the poem gives us a true picture of Border life. The poet or novelist has a very real advantage over the historian in that he can make history live for us while the historian can merely record facts. Scott, in *The Lady of the Lake,* takes us into the inner lives of the Highlanders and Borderers, that is, remnants of Gaelic tribes, Saxon tribes, and a mixture of Celt and Teuton. Their thoughts and feelings are revealed to us; we see them at home with their families; we understand many of their interesting customs and beliefs, and, consequently, they become to us real, living men and women.

That Scott has revitalized, made to live again, a historical period and an important historical figure can be understood from the following accounts abridged from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*. These paragraphs should be carefully read, as they form the historical background of the poem. They show that Scott has selected a "dramatic moment" in history as the basis or unstable situation for his plot. The actions and reactions of characters upon each other, or of characters to or upon environment were strongly motivated by history. Scott did not invent actions and feelings; he adapted them from life in Scotland as life had been lived. In the background of Scottish history is the struggle and hatred of a thousand years. Gael, Scott and English had lived through years of conquest and terror. Mixture of race and language, struggle for livelihood, and for racial solidarity established a stage upon which the events of *The Lady of the Lake* seem convincing and true. A spark would set the heather on fire at the time our story opens, we may say, when we think of the mixed races, and the ancient grudges and feuds.

B. HIGHLANDERS AND BORDERERS OF SCOTLAND

(Abridged from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*)

There were two great divisions of the country, the Highlands and the Borders, which were so much wilder and more barbarous than the others, that they might be said to be altogether without law; and although they were nominally subjected to the King of Scotland, yet when he desired to

execute any justice in either of those great districts, he could not do so otherwise than by marching there in person at the head of a strong body of soldiers, seizing the offenders and putting them to death with little or no form of trial. Such a rough course of justice, perhaps, made these disorderly countries quiet for a short time, but it rendered them still more averse to the royal government in their hearts, and disposed on the slightest occasion to break out, either with disorders among themselves, or into open rebellion. I must give you some particular account of these wild and uncivilized districts of Scotland, and of the particular sort of people who were their inhabitants, that you may know what I mean when I speak of Highlanders and Borderers.

The Highlands of Scotland, so called from the rocky mountainous character of the country, consist of a very large proportion of the northern parts of that kingdom. It was into these pathless wildernesses that the Romans drove the ancient inhabitants of Great Britain (Celts, Picts and Scots) ; and it was from these that they afterwards sallied to invade and distress that part of Britain which the Romans had conquered, and in some degree civilized. The inhabitants of the Highlands spoke, and still speak, a language totally different from the Lowland Scotts[1]. The Lowland Scotch does not differ greatly from Eng-

[1]The Gaelic is a Celtic dialect. Lowland Scotch is mixed with northern English, a Teutonic dialect, while English as we know it is a midland or mixed Teutonic dialect. The

lish, and the inhabitants of Scotland and England easily understood each other, though neither of them comprehended the Gaelic, which is the language of the Highlanders. The dress of these mountaineers was also different from that of the Lowlanders. They wore a plaid, or mantle of frieze, or of a striped stuff called tartan, one end of which, being wrapped around the waist, formed a short petticoat, which descended to the knee, while the rest was folded round them like a sort of cloak. They had buskins made of rawhide; and those who could get a bonnet, had that covering for their heads, though many never wore one during their whole lives, but had only their own shaggy hair tied back by a leathern strap. They went always armed, carrying bows and arrows, large swords, which they wielded with both hands, called claymores, poleaxes, and daggers for close fight. For defense, they had a round wooden shield, or target stuck full of nails; and their great men had shirts of mail, not unlike to the flannel shirts now worn, only composed of links of iron instead of threads of worsted; but the common men were so far from desiring armor, that they sometimes threw their plaids away, and fought in their shirts, which they wore very long and large, after the Irish fashion.

This part of the Scottish nation (Highlanders) was divided into clans, that is, tribes. The persons composing each of these clans believed them-

---

languages found on the border indicated the races found there, which would not mix. Each retained its speech, its traditions, manners, customs, and religion.

selves all to be descended, at some distant period, from the same common ancestor, whose name they usually bore. Thus, one tribe was called MacDonald, which signifies the sons of Donald; another MacGregor, or the sons of Gregor; MacNeil, the sons of Neil, and so on. Every one of these tribes had its own separate chief or commander, whom they supposed to be the immediate representative of the great father of the tribe from whom they were all descended. To this chief they paid the most unlimited obedience, and willingly followed his commands in peace or in war; not caring, although, in doing so, they transgressed the laws of the king, or went into rebellion against the king himself. Each tribe lived in a valley, or district of the mountains, separated from the others; and they often made war upon, and fought desperately, with each other. But with Lowlanders, they were always at war. They differed from them in language, in dress, and in manners; and they believed that the richer grounds of the low country had formerly belonged to their ancestors, and therefore they made incursions upon it, and plundered it without mercy. The Lowlanders, on the other hand, equal in courage and superior in discipline, gave many severe checks to the Highlanders; and thus there was almost constant war or discord between them, though natives of the same country.

Upon the whole, you can easily understand that these Highland clans, living among such high and inaccessible mountains, and paying obedience to no one save their own chiefs, should

have been very instrumental in disturbing the tranquillity of the kingdom of Scotland. They had many virtues, being a kind, brave, and hospitable people, and remarkable for their fidelity to their chiefs; but they were restless, revengeful, fond of plunder, and delighting rather in war than in peace, in disorder than in repose.

The Border countries were in a state little more favorable to a quiet or peaceful government. In some respects the inhabitants of the counties of Scotland lying opposite to England, greatly resembled the Highlanders, and particularly in their being, like them, divided into clans, and having chiefs, whom they obeyed in preference to the King, or the officers whom he placed among them. How clanship came to prevail in the Highlands and Borders, and not in the provinces which separated them from each other, it is not easy to conjecture, but the fact was so. The Borders are not, indeed, so mountainous and inaccessible a country as the Highlands; but they are full of hills, especially on the more western part of the frontier, and were in early times covered with forests, and divided by small rivers and morasses into dales and valleys, where the different clans lived, making war sometimes on the English, sometimes on each other, and sometimes on the more civilized country which lay behind them.

But though the Borderers resembled the Highlanders in their mode of government and habits of plundering, and, as it may be truly added, in their disobedience to the general government of Scotland, yet they differed in many particulars.

The Highlanders fought always on foot; the Borderers were all horsemen. The Borderers spoke the same language with the Lowlanders, wore the same sort of dress, and carried the same arms. Being accustomed to fight against the English, they were also much better disciplined than the Highlanders. But in point of obedience to the Scottish government, they were not much different from the clans of the north.

Military officers, called Wardens, were appointed along the Borders, to keep these unruly people in order; but as these wardens were generally themselves chiefs of clans, they did not do much to mend the evil. Robert the Bruce committed a great part of the charge of the Borders to the good Lord James of Douglas, who fulfilled his trust with great fidelity. But the power which the family of Douglas thus acquired, proved afterwards, in the hands of his successors, very dangerous to the crown of Scotland.

Thus you see how much the poor country of Scotland was torn to pieces by the quarrels of the nobles, the weakness of the laws, the disorders of the Highlands, and the restless incursions of the Borderers, and how Scott used this setting for his romance and a plot which is true and convincing as a picture of border warfare.

C. JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND (1512-1542)

(Abridged from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*)

James V., the son of James IV. of Scotland, and Margaret, who was the sister of Henry VIII. of England, ascended the throne when a child

of hardly two years. His father had been killed in the battle of Flodden in 1513. The Queen Mother ruled as regent until she lost favor with her people. She then lost the regency and the control of her son. The Douglas family, into whose control the King had fallen, guarded him very closely.

The close restraint, in which the King found himself, increased his eager desire to be rid of all the Douglases together.

Accordingly, he prevailed on his mother, Queen Margaret, to yield up to him the castle of Stirling. Having put it into the hands of a governor who was friendly to himself, he waited for a favorable opportunity and one morning, pretending to be going on a stag hunt, he fled to Stirling Castle. The drawbridges were raised, the portcullises were dropt, guards set, and every measure of defense and precaution resorted to.

Soon a sentence of forfeiture was passed against the Earl of Angus, and he was driven into exile with all of his friends and kinsmen.

Freed from the stern control of the Douglas family, James V. now began to exercise the government in person, and displayed most of the qualities of a wise and good prince. He was handsome in his person, and resembled his father in the fondness for military exercises, and the spirit of chivalrous humor which James IV. loved to display. He also inherited his father's love of justice, and his desire to establish and enforce wise and equal laws which should protect the weak against the oppression of the great. It was

easy enough to make laws, but to put them in vigorous exercise was of much greater difficulty; and in his attempt to accomplish this laudable purpose, James often incurred the ill-will of the more powerful nobles. He was a well-educated and accomplished man; and like his ancestor, James I., he was a poet and musician. He had, however, his defects. He avoided his father's failing of profusion, having no hoarded treasures to employ on pomp and show; but he rather fell into the opposite fault, being of a temper too parsimonious; and though he loved state and display, he endeavored to gratify that taste as economically as possible, so that he has been censured as rather close and covetous. He was also, though the foibles seem inconsistent, fond of pleasure and disposed to too much indulgence. It must be added, that when provoked, he was unrelenting even to cruelty; for which he had some apology, considering the ferocity of the subjects over whom he reigned. But, on the whole, James V. was an amiable man, and a good sovereign.

His first care was to bring the Borders of Scotland to some degree of order. These, as you were formerly told, were inhabited by tribes of men, forming each a different clan, as they were called, and obeying no orders, save those which were given by their chiefs. These chiefs were supposed to represent the first founder of the name, or family. The attachment of the clansmen to the chief was very great; indeed they paid respect to no one else. In this the Borderers agreed with the Highlanders, as also in their love

of plunder and neglect of the general laws of the country. But the Border men wore no tartan dress, and served almost always on horseback, whereas the Highlanders acted always on foot. You will also remember that the Borderers spoke the Scottish language, and not the Gaelic tongue used by the mountaineers.

The situations of these clans on the frontiers exposed them to constant war; so that they thought of nothing else but of collecting bands of their followers together, and making incursions, without much distinction, on the English, on the Lowland (or inland) Scots, or upon each other. They paid little respect either to times of truce or treaties of peace, but exercised their depredations without regard to either, and often occasioned wars between England and Scotland which would not otherwise have taken place.

The first step of James V. was to secure the persons of the principal chieftains by whom these disorders were privately encouraged, and other powerful chiefs, who might have opposed the King's purposes. These were seized and imprisoned in separate fortresses in the inland country.

James then assembled an army, in which warlike purposes were united with those of silvan sport; for he ordered all the gentlemen in the wild districts which he intended to visit, to bring in their best dogs, as if his only purpose had been to hunt the deer in those desolate regions. This was intended to prevent the Borderers from taking the alarm, in which case they would have

retreated into their mountains and fastnesses, from whence it would have been difficult to dislodge them.

These men had no distinct idea of the offenses which they had committed, and consequently no apprehension of the King's displeasure against them. The laws had been so long silent in that remote and disorderly country, that the outrages which were practiced by the strong against the weak, seemed to the perpetrators the natural course of society, and to present nothing that was worthy of punishment.

Thus as the King, in the beginning of his expedition, suddenly aproached the castle of Piers Cockburn of Henderland, that baron was in the act of providing a great entertainment to welcome him, when James caused him to be suddenly seized on, and executed. Other nobles met a similar fate.

Such were the effects of the terror struck by these general executions, that James was said to have made "the rush bush keep the cow"; that is to say that even in this lawless part of the country, men dared no longer make free with property, and cattle might remain on their pastures unwatched.

On the other hand, the Borders of Scotland were greatly weakened by the destruction of so many brave men, who, notwithstanding their lawless course of life, were true defenders of their country; and there is reason to censure the extent to which James carried his severity, as being to

a certain degree impolitic, and beyond doubt cruel and excessive.

In the like manner, James proceeded against the Highland chiefs; and by executions, forfeitures, and other severe measures, he brought the Northern mountaineers, as he had already done those of the South, into comparative subjection. He then set at liberty the Border chiefs, and others whom he had imprisoned, lest they should have offered any hindrance to the course of his justice.

James V., like his father James IV., had a custom of going about the country disguised as a private person, in order that he might hear complaints which might not otherwise reach his ears, and, perhaps, that he might enjoy amusements which he could not have partaken of in his avowed royal character.

James V. was very fond of hunting, and, when he pursued that amusement in the Highlands, he used to wear the peculiar dress of that country, having a long and wide Highland shirt, and jacket of tartan velvet, with plaid hose, and everything else corresponding. The accounts for these are in the books of his chamberlain, still preserved.

The reign of James V. was not alone distinguished by his personal adventures and pastimes, but is honorably remembered on account of wise laws made for the government of his people, and for restraining the crimes and violence which were frequently practiced among them; especially those of assassination, burning of houses, and

driving of cattle, the usual and ready means by which powerful chiefs avenged themselves of their feudal enemies.

As the Kingdom of Scotland, except during a very short and indecisive war with England, remained at peace till near the end of the reign of James V., and as that monarch was a wise and active prince, it might have been hoped that he at least would have escaped the misfortunes which seemed to haunt the name of Stuart. But he was scarcely thirty-one years old, in the prime of life, when he died. James had suffered some of his advisers to hurry him into a war with England. When the news of the rout of Solway, when the Scots had fled without even attempting to fight, was brought to him, he shut himself up in Falkland, and refused to listen to any consolation. A burning fever, the consequence of his grief and shame, seized on the unfortunate monarch. When they brought him tidings that his wife had given birth to a daughter, who afterwards became the brilliant, but most unfortunate, Mary Queen of Scots, he only replied, "It is so?" reflecting on the alliance which had placed the Stuart family on the throne; "Then God's will be done. It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass." With these words, presaging the extinction of his house, he made a signal of adieu to his courtiers, spoke little more, but turned his face to the wall and, when scarcely thirty-one years old, in the very prime of life, he died of the most melancholy of all diseases, a broken heart.

CRITICISM

(An approach to the study of *The Lady of the Lake*)

"Harp of the North! that mouldering long hast
hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's
spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents
sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence
keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to
weep?

"Not thus in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's
matchless eye.

"O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;

O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!"

With these stanzas Sir Walter Scott began *The Lady of the Lake.* He expressed his regret that the "Harp of the North," or the poets and story-tellers of Scotland, had been so long silent; that the songs and legends of brave men and fair women had been neglected or forgotten. In this poem he proposed to "wake once more" that Harp, symbolic of Scottish minstrelsy. His hand upon the string might be rude, he explained, but if "one heart throb higher at its sway," his effort would not have been in vain.

Why was the poem written? Sir Walter Scott wrote *The Lady of the Lake* because he loved, and had loved from childhood, the tales of the Border and the Highlands. He hoped to give pleasure to his readers by telling, in a straightforward manner, with spirit and animation, a good story—a story moving rapidly and abounding in stirring descriptions and vivid pictures. Scott himself said that if there was anything good about his poetry it was that quality which pleased "soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active dispositions." One critic has said: "All

Scott's verse is written for boys; and boys, generation after generation, will love it with the same freshness of response. It has adventure, manliness, bright landscape, fighting, the obvious emotions; it is like a gallop across the moors in a blithe wind; it has plenty of story, and is almost as easily read as if it were prose."[1]

To what type does the poem belong? In type *The Lady of the Lake* is classified as a metrical romance; that is, a long narrative poem having a plot somewhat complex but lacking the intricacy, the national scope, and the sublimity of tone of the longest of narrative poems, the epic. Our interest in the metrical romance is usually centered, as is the case in this poem, on the romantic aspect of the story.

What is the meter? The meter of the poem is iambic tetrameter, that is, each of the lines is made up of eight syllables, the accent or stress falling usually upon the even syllable:

Thĕ stāg ăt ēve hăd drūnk hĭs fĭll,
Whĕre dānced thĕ mōon ŏn Mōnăn's rĭll.

Each of the cantos, however, begins with a single introductory stanza, or a group of such instances each consisting of nine lines or verses. In each of the first eight lines of these introductory stanzas there are five iambic feet while the last line has six of the same type. The stanza has a definite rhyme scheme, *a b a b b c b c c.* This kind of stanza is called a Spenserian stanza

[1]Arthur Symons in *The Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1904.

because it was first used by Edmund Spenser in his *Faery Queen.*

The rhyme scheme of the main body of the poem is *aa, bb, cc,* etc., or in couplets.

The rather long ballad given in Canto Fourth is written, for the most part, in typical ballad form—four-line stanzas made up of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter lines alternating and rhyming *a b c b.*

Other verse variations are found in the various songs introduced.

Where do the events of the story take place? The scene of the story is in Scotland, chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The reading of the poem will gain additional interest if the map is used for locating the various places mentioned.

When did the events happen? The events of the story are supposed to have taken place during the reign of James V. of Scotland, during the early half of the sixteenth century.

What is the duration of action? The poem is divided into six Cantos, each of which recounts the events of one day. The length of time which elapses, then, between the opening of Canto First to the closing of Canto Sixth is six days.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE


Loch Tay
Glen Dochart
Loch Earn
River Earn
BENMORE
Loch
BENTULACHAN
Voil
Strath Ire
BENVOIRLICH
Glen Artney
Rob Roy's cove
BENVANE
Forest of Finlas
Glen-finlas
Loch
UAMH VAR
Loch Katrine
BENCHOIN
BEN EDI
Lubnaig
River
Bracklinn Falls
Ellen's Isle
The Goblin cove
BENAN
Coilantogle Ford
The Trosachs
Brigg of Turk
CALLANDER
Lanrick Mead
Braes of Doune
L. Con
BENVENUE
Loch Vennachar
Teith
BENLOMOND
L. Ard
L. Menteith
DOUNES
Bridge of Allen
Strath Allen
Duchray W.
Port of Menteith
BEN-REOCH
River Forth
Doune Hill
Avon W.
STIRLING
Glen Luss
GAILLOCH I.
Loch
INCH-CAILLIACH
Lomond
River Kelvin
Strath Enrick
The Lennox
Glen Fruin
Glen Leven
Sketch map of
CENTRAL SCOTLAND
showing localities
mentioned in the
LADY of the LAKE
Scale of miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 10
River Clyde
Bess Mills-Bullard

The Lady of the Lake

CANTO FIRST.

THE CHASE.

Harp of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
  On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
  Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
  Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O, minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
  Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
  Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,

1. *Harp of the North.* The harp was the national musical instrument of Scotland in early days. Scott is addressing the harp because he intends to tell a story of ancient Scotland. In these first three stanzas, which are an introduction to the entire poem, he is expressing his regret that the art of minstrelsy, the singing of songs and telling of stories of brave deeds had disappeared from Scotland.

2. *Saint Fillan's.* A Scotch saint. Several wells and springs were dedicated to him, the waters of which were believed to be powerful in cases of madness.

"Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore."

—*Marmion.*

3. *Numbers. Verses.*

10. *Caledon.* Caledonia is the name used often in poetry for Scotland.

When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
  Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
  At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
  Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's
      matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
  That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
  Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
  Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
  Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I.

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade:
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,

---

31. *Glenartney.* Glen means valley. Glenartney is the valley of the Artney. See map.

33. *Benvoirlich.* Mt. Voirlich. Ben is the Gaelic word for mountain. See map.

And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II.

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"—
The antlered monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase grew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III.

Yelled on the view the opening pack,
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once

---

45. *Beamed frontlet.* Forehead having branched horns.

53. *Uam-Var.* "Ua-Var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly Uaigh-Mor, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callander in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said by tradition to have been the abode of a giant."—Scott.

54. *Yelled on the view the opening pack.* The dogs barked at sight of the game.

The awakened mountain gave response.
An hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
An hundred voices joined the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the doe;
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where 'tis told
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his path-way hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse;
And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly, on the mountain-side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V.

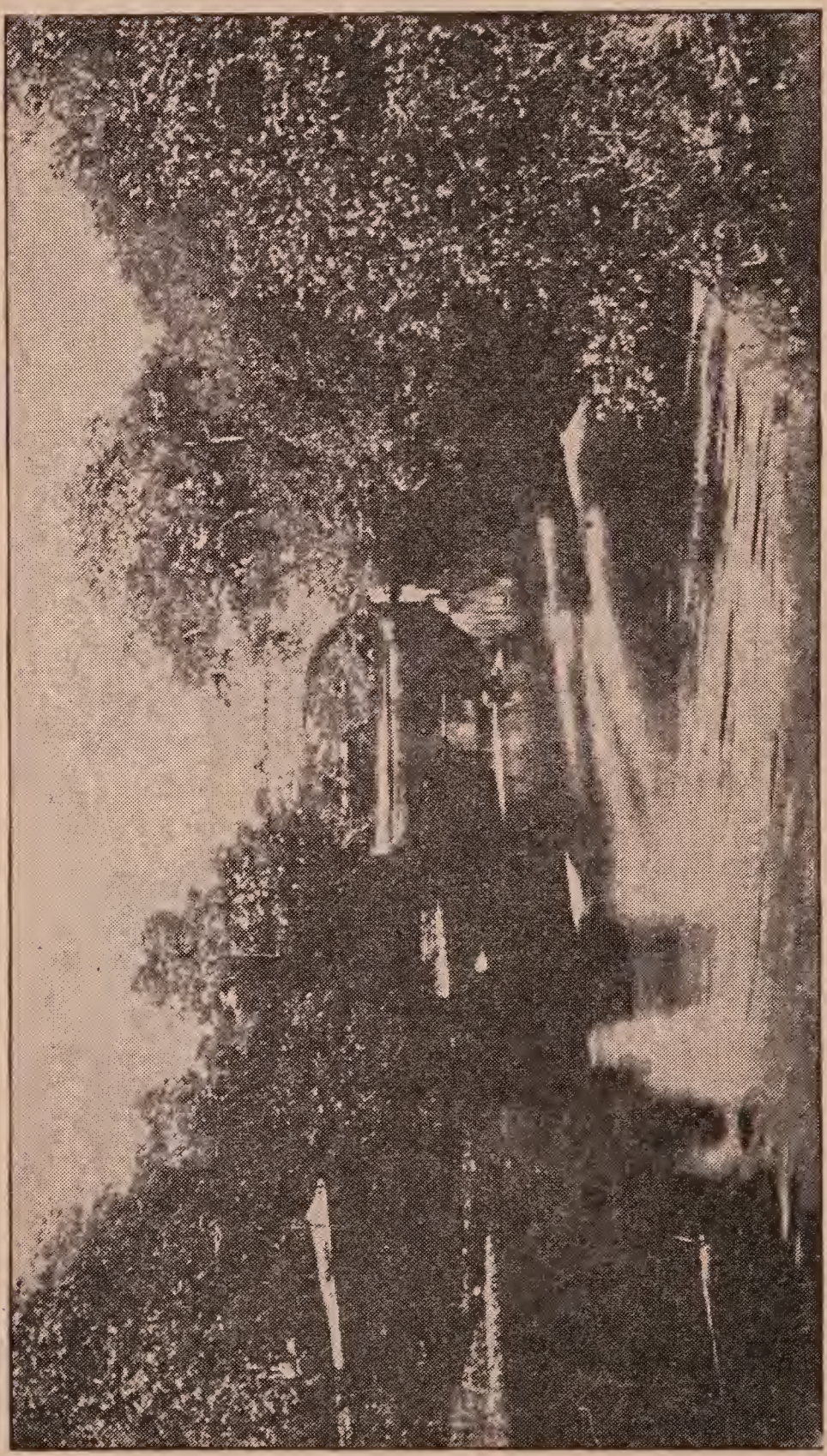
The noble stag was pausing now,
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wandered o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And pondered refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copse-wood grey,
That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
Fresh vigor with the hope returned,
With flying foot the heath he spurned,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'T were long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more;
What reins were tightened in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith,—
For twice that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,

89. *Menteith.* The district through which the river Teith flows.

93. *Lochard. Loch* is the Gaelic word for lake. See map for this and mountains, lakes, rivers, etc., named in stanzas following.



THE BRIGG OF TURK

That reached the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For, jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the blood-hounds stanch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII.

The Hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound, and death-halloo,

---

112. *Brigg of Turk.* Brigg means bridge.

Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew;
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couched, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs to rise no more;
Then, touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!

---

145. *Trosachs'*. "The term *Trosachs* signifies the rough or bristling territory."—Graham.

163. *Seine*. A river in France.

Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast;
And on the Hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path, in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;

Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child,
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower
Found in each clift a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten craigs retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath

197. *Shinar's.* See Genesis XI, 1-9, for the story of the tower of Babel.

Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse, 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim,
As served the wild duck's brood to swim;
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the Hunter strayed,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat.
Yet broader floods extending still,
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far-projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Lock Katrine lay beneath him rolled;
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down on the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Benan heaved high his forehead bare.

---

263. *Loch Katrine.* One of the loveliest of Scottish lakes. "Loch Ketterin is the Celtic pronunciation. In his notes to *The Fair Maid of Perth*, the author has signified his belief that the lake was named after the Catterins, or wild robbers, who haunted its shores."—Author's Edition.

277. *Benan.* "Little Mountain."

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
The Stranger, raptured and amazed,
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,
"For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In the soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister grey.
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matins' distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell—
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewildered stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that;—the war and chase

Give little choice of resting-place;—
A summer night, in green-wood spent,
Were but to-morrow's merriment;
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found;
To meet with Highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone;—my bugle strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried."

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow twig to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touched this silver strand,
Just as the Hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.

313. *Highland plunderers.* See Introduction—"Highlanders and Borderers."

With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seemed to stand
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow;
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight hare-bell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear.

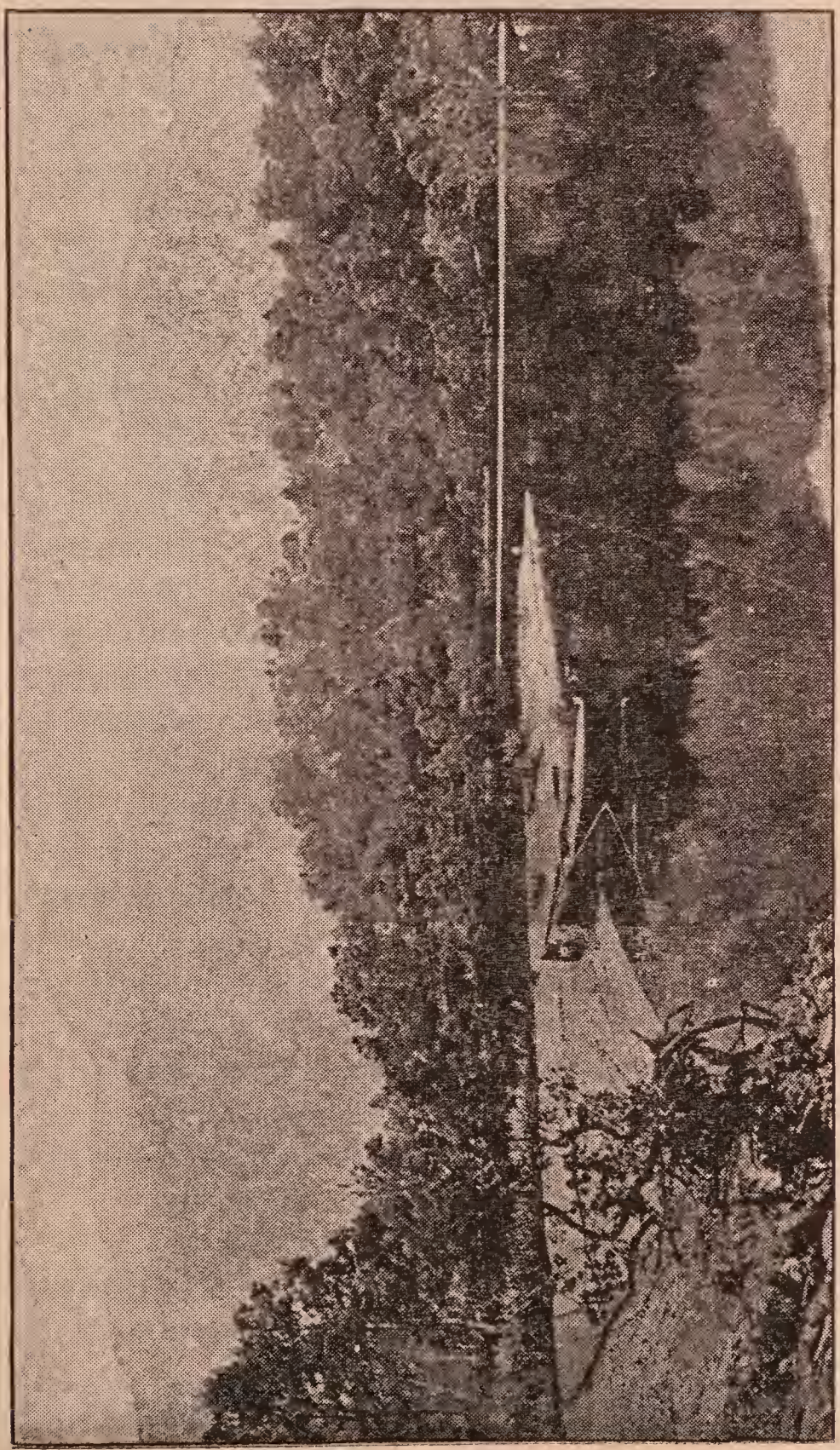
XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid

Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion, unrevealed,
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
O need I tell that passion's name!

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:—
"Father!" she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
Awhile she paused, no answer came,—
"Malcolm, was thine the blast?" the name
Less resolutely uttered fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.



LOCH KATRINE

"A stranger I," the Huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar
Pushed her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen;
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing,)
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth,
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports, or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless, except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trod the shore.
Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,

In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seemed that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII.

A while the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied
That Highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill.
"Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy hath erred," he said;
"No right have I to claim, misplaced,
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand,
I found a fay in Fairy Land."—

XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the side,—
"I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore;

But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
A grey-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent.
He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
That tasselled horn so gaily gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn,
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV.

The Stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doomed, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprise,
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me, first, the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."

458. *Old Allan-bane foretold your plight.* The old minstrel was believed to have the gift of looking into the future.

464. *Lincoln green.* The color of cloth worn by the huntsmen of the Lowland. It was made in Lincoln.

475. *Errant-knight.* *Errant* means wandering. Knights formerly wandered about searching adventure.

The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew;
With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The Stranger viewed the shore around;
'T was all so close with copse-wood bound,
Nor track nor path-way might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain-maiden showed
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And opened on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

---

504. *Here, for retreat in dangerous hour, etc.* "The Celtic chieftains whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong or secluded situation."—Scott's note.

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine-trees, over-head,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And withered heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favored flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she stayed,
And gaily to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"—

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."

He crossed the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung,
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindle hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
That blackening streaks of blood retained,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised;
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield

A blade like this in battle-field."
She sighed, then smiled, and took the word;
"You see the guardian champion's sword:
As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand;
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus, or Ascabart;
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."

XXIX.

The Mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unasked his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,

---

573. *Ferragus, Ascabart.* According to Scott, fabled giants, two sons of Anak, about whom many stories have been told.

580. *To whom, though more than kindred knew, etc.* These lines seem difficult. They probably mean merely that Ellen, her own mother being dead, loved her aunt, Lady Margaret, as a mother.

586. *Such then the reverence to a guest.* "The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish, to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some

That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestioned turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names,
"The Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Out-stripped his comrades, missed the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wandered here."

XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire.
Well showed the elder lady's mien
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks displayed
The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Showed she was come of gentle race:
'T were strange in ruder rank to find
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turned all inquiry light away:

circumstances, which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of."—Scott.

"Weird women we! by dale and down
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'T is thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Filled up the symphony between.

XXXI.

SONG

"Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the day-break from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,

Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG CONTINUED

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest; thy chase is done;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillé."

XXXIII.

The hall was cleared—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the hearth-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;

Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes;
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then,—from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view,
O were his senses false or true!
Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now!

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk, and speak of love;
She listened with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,

With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still, a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose and sought the moon-shine pure.

XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm;
The aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:—
"Why is it at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?

Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme —
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."—
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

I.

THE ISLAND

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'T is morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a Minstrel grey:
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan-bane!

II.

SONG

"Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, Stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

"High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battle line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honored meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,

Thy lady constant, kind and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's smile,
Be memory of the lonely isle!

III

SONG CONTINUED

"But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye
Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap erewhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

"Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged!
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle."—

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reached the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The Stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The harper on the islet beach,

Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seemed watching the awakening fire;
So still he sate as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still, as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.

V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vexed spaniel, from the beach,
Bayed at the prize beyond his reach.
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepened on her cheek the rose?—
Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy
And prize such conquest of her eye!

60. *Sate.* The odd form of *sat.*

VI.

While yet he loitered on the spot,
It seemed as Ellen marked him not;
But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made;
And after, oft the Knight would say
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell,
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
Watched him wind slowly round the hill;
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid—
"Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!"
'T was thus upbraiding conscience said,
"Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of Southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strained his eye,
Another step than thine to spy.—
Wake, Allan-bane," aloud she cried,
To the old Minstrel by her side,
"Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme!"—

109. *Graeme.* "The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which for metrical reasons is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possession in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can

Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,
When deep the conscious maiden blushed;
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII.

The Minstrel waked his harp—three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.—
"Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,"
Clasping his withered hands, he said,
"Vainly thou bidst me wake the strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe;
And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.—
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,

---

boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals." —Scott.

131. *Saint Modan.* "I am not prepared to show that St. Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for St. Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound."—Scott.

Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the Minstrel's knell!

VIII.

"But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's bannered hall,
Ere Douglases, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—
O! if yet worse mishap and woe
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow,
Fraught with unutterable woe;
Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die."—

---

141. *Bothwell's bannered hall.* A castle which belonged to the Douglas family. It was situated near Glasgow.

142. *Douglases, to ruin driven.* The downfall of the Douglases of the house of Angus, during the reign of James V. is the event alluded to in the text. See Introduction, "James V. of Scotland."

IX.

Soothing she answered him, "Assuage,
Mine honoured friend, the fears of age.
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale, or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resigned
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the King's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."—
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old Harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:—
"Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours thou hast lost!
O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place;
To see my favourite's step advance,
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye.
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"—

XI.

"Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sighed),
"Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy;
Nor would my footstep spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine;
And then for suitors proud and high,

200. *The Lady of the Bleeding Heart.* The emblem of the Douglas family bore a red heart. Robert Bruce on his deathbed gave to James Douglas instructions that his heart be borne to Jerusalem. The bleeding heart was then chosen as their heraldic emblem by the Douglases.

To bend before my conquering eye,
Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch Lomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII.

The ancient Bard her glee repressed:
"Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
For who, through all this western wild,
Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers give place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide;
And since, though outlawed, hath his hand
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dared give,—ah! woe the day,
That I such hated truth should say—
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer,
Even the rude refuge we have here?
Alas, this wild marauding chief
Alone might hazard our relief,
And now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;

---

216. *Lennox foray.* A raid into Lennox, territory lying south of Loch Lomond.

221. *Holy-Rood.* The royal castle at Edinburgh.

Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear;
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
That thou mightst guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
Thy hand is on a lion's mane."—

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
"My debts to Roderick's house I know;
All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child;
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnon's cell;

236. *Full soon may dispensation, etc.* It was necessary that Roderick secure the special permission of the Pope before he and Ellen could be married, as they were cousins.

260. *Maronnon's cell.* "The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to St. Maronnon."—Scott.

Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

"Thou shak'st, good friend, thy tresses grey—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own?—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
And generous—save vindictive mood,
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughtered in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,

---

270. *Bracklinn's.* "This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Callander in Menteith."—Scott.

They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air,
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"—

XV.

"What think I of him?—woe the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!
Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
The footsteps of a secret foe.
If courtly spy hath harboured here,

306. *Tine-man.* "Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of *Tine-man*, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought."—Scott.

308. *Hotspur's bows.* Douglas with his Scottish spearmen had formed an alliance with Percy, or Hotspur, and his English bowmen. The story of this rebellion is told by Shakespeare in his *Henry IV.*

What may we for the Douglas fear?
What for this island, deemed of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray
What yet may jealous Roderick say?
—Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!
Bethink thee of the discord dread,
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme;
Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."—

XVI.

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew,
And bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steered full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they passed,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine

---

319. *Beltane.* May-day.

The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,

340. *Sir Roderick's bannered Pine.* The pine tree was the emblem of Clan-Alpine.

362. *Gathering.* The signal cry which announced the gathering of the clan or called the men together.

And hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled out-cry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow,
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clans-men raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise
Each boat-man, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burthen bore,
In such wild cadence, as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees,
The chorus first could Allan know,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near, and nearer as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX.

BOAT SONG

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
Honored and blessed be the ever-green Pine!
Long may the tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back again,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho, ieroe!"—

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise again,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

---

396. *Roderigh Vich Alpine.* Black Roderick, son of Alpine. *Dhu* means black. *Vich* signifies the son of.

406. *Again.* The old form *agen* is used in the 1830 edition.

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"—
Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blest in their shadow might grow!
Loud from Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"—

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw,
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,

431. *O! that the rose-bud, etc.* The reference here is to Ellen.

The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:—
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?"—
Reluctantly and slow the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast,
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain side."—
Then, like a sun-beam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'T is that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely pressed,
Such holy drops her tresses steeped,
Thought 't was an hero's eye that weeped.

Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Marked she, that fear, (affection's proof)
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII.

Allan, with a wistful look the while,
Marked Roderick landing on the isle;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
Then dashed, with hasty hand, away
From his dimmed eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
"Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
In my poor follower's glistening eye?
I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
When in my praise he led the lay
O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud,
While many a minstrel answered loud,
When Percy's Norman pennon, won
In bloody field, before me shone,
And twice ten knights, the least a name
As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
Was I of all that marshalled crowd,

497. *Percy's Norman pennon.* Percy's Norman pennon was captured by the ancestor of Douglas. It became a family trophy.

Though the waned crescent owned my might,
And in my train trooped lord and knight,
Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,
And Bothwell's bard flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true,
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast;
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dog with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.

---

504. *Waned crescent.* "Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, whose shield bore a crescent moon, had endeavored to set the king free from the Douglases, but had been defeated by them. His failure is hence called the waning of the crescent."—Yonge.

506. *Blantyre.* A priority or closter near Bothwell Castle.

525. *Unhooded.* The falcon's eyes were kept covered until time to release him in search of prey. He usually did not sit quietly when unhooded.

And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the Wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curled closely round his bonnet blue.
Trained to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy;
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
Outstripped in speed the mountaineer;
Right up Benlomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,

527. *Goddess.* The reference may be to Diana, goddess of the hunt.

As played the feather on his crest.
Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

And back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late returned? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'T is mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas's shade,
Nor strayed I safe, for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risked life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas's sake.

---

577. *Royal ward.* Malcolm, not yet of age, was under the guardianship of the court.

Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me again."—

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger hilt he played,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:—

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honoured mother; Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?—
And Græme; in whom I hope to know

Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land,—
List all!—the King's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
Where chiefs with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gate-way struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep-walk waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless, and so ruthless known,
Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game,
What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
By fate of Border chivalry.
Yet more! amid Glenfinlas's green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know:
Your counsel in the streight I show."—

---

616. *Boasts to have tamed the Border-side.* Both the Highlanders and the Lowlanders claimed the Border territory. See Introduction, "Highlanders and Borderers."

623-625. *Meggat, Yarrow, Tweed, Ettrick.* Rivers in the southern part of Scotland. Meggat, Yarrow, and Ettrick are tributaries of the Tweed.

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,
Then turned their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme;
But from his glance it well appeared,
'T was but for Ellen that he feared;
While, sorrowful, but undismayed,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:—
"Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er;
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For well thou know'st, at this grey head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy King's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride
Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart,
The refuge of some forest cell;
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till, on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be passed and o'er."—

XXX.

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
"So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
No, never! Blasted be yon pine,

My fathers' ancient crest, and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
Will bind to us each Western Chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
And, when I light the nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
—Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
I meant not all my heat might say.—
Small need of inroad, or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite
Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foiled King, from pathless glen,
Shall bootless turn him home again."—

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,

678. *Links of Forth.* Windings of the river Forth.

Till wakened by the morning beam;
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawned around,
By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
"Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
"My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.

It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'T was I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
I love him still, despite my wrongs,
By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined."—

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darkened brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited Love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes, that mocked at tears before,
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherished hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its checkered shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—

Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said;
"Back, minion! holdst thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delayed."—
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
"Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety, save his sword!"—
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Gripped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength:—"Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil

Of such dishonourable broil!"—
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced and blade half-bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
As faltered through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful word.
"Rest safe till morning; pity 't were
Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his free-born clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
Malise, what ho!"—his hench-man came;
"Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."
Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold,
"Fear nothing for thy favourite hold;
The spot, an angel deigned to grace,
Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight, as in blaze of day,

805. *Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan.* Roderick and his men will not become servile followers of the King.

Though with his boldest at his back
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track,—
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
Naught here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet again.—
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour."—
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan followed to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's command),
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,

---

831. *The Fiery Cross.* "When a chieftain designed to summon his clan upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh* or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal despatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours if the danger was common to them. At sight of the *Fiery Cross*, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He

From those who to the signal came;
Far up the lake 't were safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broadsword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened fold,
And stripped his limbs to such array,
As best might suit the watery way.

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"—
The minstrel's hand he kindly pressed,—
"Oh! could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
Who loves the Chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honoured Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air!
Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him naught,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side."—
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.

---

who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal."—Scott.

Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye,
Far mid the lake his form to spy.
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could swim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

THE GATHERING

Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
  Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boy-hood legends store,
  Of their strange ventures happed by land or sea,
  How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
  Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his
      ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
  How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
  And solitary heath, the signal knew;
  And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
  What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,

---

18. *Fiery Cross.* See note Canto II, line 831.

Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water-lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain-side,
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove,
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such Antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood oft aghast

50. *Antiquity.* Olden times.

At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As from the cliffs of Benvenue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV.

A heap of withered boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
Bare-footed, in his frock and hood.
His grizzled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That Monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 't was said, of heathen lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er.
The hallowed creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;

---

76. *Druid.* An ancient Celtic priest.
81. *The hallowed creed.* The Christian creed.

No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase called off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told:
His mother watched a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scattered lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fettered there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare are framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mocked at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet flushed and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate shrouded in her mantle's shade:
—She said no shepherd sought her side,

No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite,
But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfessed.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain, the learning of the age
Unclasped the sable-lettered page!
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride;

Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the river demon rise;
The mountain mist took form and limb
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swelled with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death;
Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim

154. *River Demon.* "The River Demon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers."—Scott.

156. *Noontide hag.* "A tall, emaciated, gigantic figure, supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart."—Scott.

156. *Goblin grim.* "A goblin dressed in antique armour and having one hand covered with blood, called from that circumstance Red-hand, is a tenant of the forest of Glenmore and Rothiemurcus."—Scott.

Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
All augured ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'T was all prepared;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.

---

168. *Ben-Shie.* "The Ban-Schie implies a Female Fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle and streaming hair."—Scott.

170. *Where mortal horsemen ne'er might ride.* "A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye as well as the ear may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena, with which history abounds."—Scott.

Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet formed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Calliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross, thus formed, he held on high,
With wasted hand and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke.

IX.

"Woe to the clans-man, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clans-man's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and woe."

---

191. *Inch-Calliach.* An island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The name, according to Scott, means Isle of Nuns or of Old Women.

200. *Sepulchral yew.* The yew trees were often found in churchyards or cemeteries.

He paused;—the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook,
And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his mustered force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
"Woe to the traitor, woe!"
Benan's grey scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X.

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his muttered spell.
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
"Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,
A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,

212. *Strook.* The old form of struck.

While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
  And infamy and woe."
Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As gos-hawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
  Of curses stammered slow;
Answering, with imprecation dread,
"Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head,
  We doom to want and woe!"
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the grey pass where birches wave,
  On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,

---

253. *Coir-Uriskin.* "This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountains of Benvenue, overhanging the southeastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch trees, mingled with oaks. * * * The name literally implies the Corri or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy Men."—Scott.

255. *Beala-nam-bo.* "Beala-nam-bo or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade overhung with aged birch trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin."—Scott.

He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clans-man's head,
Who, summoned to his Chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed;
The crosslet's point of sparkling wood,
He quenched among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:—
"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"—
He ceased: no echo gave again
The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his hench-man brave.
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
High stood the hench-man on the prow,

So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land,
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roe-buck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap;
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed
Are in thy course—Speed, Malise, speed!

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.
Nor slacked the messenger his pace;
He showed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind,
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swath his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed,
The falconer tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

341. *Achray.* See map.

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half-seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green;
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way.
—What woeful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—
Within the hall, where torch's ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

XVI.

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
  He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
  When our need was the sorest.
The font, re-appearing,
  From the rain-drops shall borrow,

349. *Duncraggan.* See map.

But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory;
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.
Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever!

XVII.

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'T is not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
Urge the precipitate career.

394. *Stumah. Duncan's dog.* The name means *faithful.*

All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall;
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood;
"The muster place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! clans-men, speed!"

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu—
"Alas!" she sobbed,—"and yet, be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!"—
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when freed
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she marked the henchman's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen,—the sapling bough

Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatched sword and targe, with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier,
But faded soon that borrowed force;
Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear, that gathered in his eye,
He left the mountain-breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,

453. *Strath-Ire.* See map.

Though reeled his sympathetic eye,
He dashed amid the torrent's roar;
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splashed high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen,—forever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife,
Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel path-way strained.

XX.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude, but glad procession, came
Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied,
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band.

The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the church-yard gate?—
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes,
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word;
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead.
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
And must he change so soon the hand,
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride;
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brook no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;

Then trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
—What in the racer's bosom stirred?
The sickening pang of hope deferred,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame;
The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

SONG

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
  Far, far from love and thee, Mary;
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

---

528. *Lubnaig.* See map.

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary!
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught!
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if returned from conquered foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV.

No faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Not faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
Thence southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,

Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name;
From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood;
Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his Chieftain's hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved at Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con;
All seemed at peace.—Now, wot ye why

607-609. *Rednock, Cardross, Duchray.* These are names of Scottish castles.

The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scanned with care?—
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung,
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had stayed full many a rock,
Hurled by primeval earthquake-shock
From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
And formed the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.

622. *Coir-nan-Uriskin.* See note Canto III, line 253.

No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rook.
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern grey.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wild-cat leaves her young;
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Grey Superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repassed the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo;
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clans-men in array.
Yet lags the Chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.

A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low-levelled sun-beam's light;
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain strand.

XXVIII.

Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn,
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove,—
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,

Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark! what mingles in the strain?
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'T is Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

Ave Maria! maiden mild!
Listen to a maiden's prayer!
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
Thou canst save amidst despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though banished, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

---

713. *Ave Maria. Hail Mary.* The hymn or prayer is addressed to the Virgin Mary.

Ave Maria! stainless styled!
Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
And listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then while his plaid he round him cast,
"It is the last time—'tis the last,"
He muttered thrice,—"the last time e'er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!"—
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
An instant 'cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,
Till with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where mustered, in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clans-men made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly strayed;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claimed her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

I.

THE PROPHECY

"The rose is fairest when 't is budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
Art thou returned from Braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
(For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
"Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said.—
"Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
Then called a slumberer by his side,

And stirred him with his slackened bow—
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the track,
Keep eagle watch till I come back."—

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
"What of the foeman?" Norman said.—
"Varying reports from near and far;
This certain,—that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command, to march from Doune;
King James, the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
"What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?"—

IV.

"'T is well advised—the Chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.

But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"—
"It is because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."—

MALISE

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery spark;
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kerns in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,

63. *The Taghairm.* "The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt the desolate recesses."—Scott.

68. *Gallangad.* Not far from Loch Lomond.

74. *Beal'maha.* A pass east of Loch Lomond.

And when we came to Dennan's Row,
A child might scathless stroke his brow."—

V.

NORMAN

"The bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretched the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couched on a shelve beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzling by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the Chief;—but hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The Hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,

---

77. *Dennan's Row.* A starting place for the ascent of Benlomond.

84. *Hero's Targe.* "There is a rock so named in the forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His waters he procured for himself, by letting down a flagon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall."—Scott.

That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE

—"Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleamed from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."—

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word:
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'T is hard for such to view, unfurled,
The curtain of the future world.
Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,—

98. *Broke.* Quartered. "Everything belonging to the chase was a matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called *breaking* the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also."—Scott.

This for my Chieftain have I borne!—
The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came,
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
But borne and branded on my soul;—
WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S
LIFE,
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."—

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair.
Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
But first our broad-swords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offered to the auspicious blow;
A spy has sought my land this morn,—
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside,
Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
He light on those shall bring him down.
—But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?"—

VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive,
Two Barons proud their banners wave.
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar."—
"By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.
When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune."—
"Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened by them, we well might bide
The battle on Benledi's side.
Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy glen;
Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,—
Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
'T is stubborn as his trusty targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their charge."—

153-155. *Moray's silver star—sable pale of Mar.* The insignia of the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Mar. A *pale* was a vertical band through the middle of the shield.

The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broad-swords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
—I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Urskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the grey stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are poured on her unheeding ear.—
"He will return—dear lady, trust!—
With joy return;—he will—he must.
Well was it time to seek, afar,
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cowed by the approaching storm.
I saw their boats with many a light,
Floating the livelong yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I marked at morn how close they ride,
Thick moored by the lone islet's side,
Like wild-ducks couching in the fen,
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the main-land side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

198. *Red streamers of the North.* The northern light or the Aurora Borealis.

X.

ELLEN

"No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,
The tear that glistened in his eye
Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his; e'en as the lake,
Itself disturbed by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden, when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream,
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Thinkest thou he trowed thine omen aught?
O no! 't was apprehensive thought
For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
(Let me be just) that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!'
Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie, and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;—

231. *Cambus-Kenneth's fane.* *Fane* meant temple or church. The reference here is to an abbey near Stirling.

He goes to do—what I had done,
Had Douglas's daughter been his son!"—

XI.

"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,—
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
My visioned sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you.
When did my gifted dream beguile?
Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings slow,
That presaged this approaching woe!
Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot!
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such a wondrous tale I know—
Dear lady, change that look of woe!
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."—

ELLEN

"Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear."—
The Minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII.

BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

"O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

"O Alice, 't was all for thy locks so bright,
And 't was all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away."—

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'T was but a fatal chance;

For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest-green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."—

XIII.

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moon-light circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear

The fairies' fatal green?
"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die."—

XIV.

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."—

---

306. *Fatal green.* "As the *Daoine Shi'*, or *Men of Peace*, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties." —Scott.

308. *Christened man.* "The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction."—Scott.

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'T is but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."—

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

BALLAD CONTINUED

"'T is merry, 't is merry, in Fairy land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

"And gaily shines the Fairy land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine."

She crossed him once—she crossed him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

---

371. *Dunfermline.* The residence of the early kings of Scotland.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were stayed,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'T is Snowdoun's Knight, 't is James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream:
"O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?"—
"An evil hap can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,
And marshalled, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
"The happy path!—what! said he naught
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
"O hasten, Allan, to the kern,
—Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure!—
What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him, to guide thee here."—

XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;

Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weighed with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower—"
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 't were female art,
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on!—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 't were infamy to wed.—
Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—

Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart!"—

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffered to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—
"O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn
If thou mayst trust yon wily kern."—
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
He paused, and turned, and came again.

XIX.

"Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.

This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship, the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the ring without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me."—
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kissed her hand—and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high—
"Murdoch! was that a signal cry?"
He stammered forth,—"I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."
He looked—he knew the raven's prey,

His own brave steed:—"Ah! gallant grey!
For thee—for me, perchance—'t were well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.—
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die."—
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed naught to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To craig and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked, till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,
For then the Lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung.—
She sung!—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;

And now, though strained and roughened, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII.

SONG

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
  They say my brain is warped and wrung—
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
  I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my wintry day!

'T was thus my hair they bade me braid,
  They bade me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn, they said,
  And my true love would meet me there.
But woe betide the cruel guile,
That drowned in blood the morning smile!
And woe betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream.—

XXIII.

"Who is this maid? What means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle grey,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."—
"'T is Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,

531-532. *Allan, Devan.* Two beautiful streams of the Lowland country.

"A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick forayed Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
"Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitched a bar!"—
"Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried,
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
"See the grey pennons I prepare,
To seek my true-love through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume!
No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his bones,
And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid air stayed,
Wave forth a banner fair and free,
Meet signal for their revelry."—

XXIV.

"Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"—
"O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.—
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green;
And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

"For O my sweet William was forester true,

He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
And so blithely he trilled the Lowland lay!

"It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise, and guessest well."—
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the Clans-man, fearfully,
She fixed her apprehensive eye;
Then turned it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV.

"The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.
"It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

"It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warned him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

"He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly."—

594. *Stag of ten.* A stag having ten branches on his antlers.

XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
"Disclose thy treachery, or die!"—
Forth at full speed the Clans-man flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
—Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laughed;
Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried,—
"Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried.
"This hour of death has given me more
Of reason's power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless, injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye,
That thou wert mine avenger born.—
Seest thou this tress?—O! still I've worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.
I will not tell thee when 't was shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still.—O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light!—
O! by thy knighthood's honoured sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's clan,

With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!—
They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell."—

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast poured his eyes at pity's claims,
And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murdered maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"—
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
And placed it on his bonnet-side:
"By Him whose word is truth! I swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
—But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
The chase is up,—but they shall know,
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."—
Barred from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turned back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:—

"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guessed
That all this Highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—
Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe;
I'll couch me here till evening grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."—

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's step aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
And not the summer solstice, there,
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze, that swept the wold,
Benumbled his drenched limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned.

XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—
"A stranger."—"What dost thou require?"—
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost."—
"Art thou a friend of Roderick?"— "No."—
"Thou dar'st not call thyself a foe?"—
"I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."—
"Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou cam'st a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."—
"Then by these tokens mayst thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."—

746. *Ere hound we slip.* To slip the hound was a hunting term meaning to loose the hound.

XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech addressed.
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honour spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke;
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 't is said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;

---

762. *The hardened flesh of mountain deer.* The Highlanders often dispensed with the cooking of their venison. Instead they pressed it between two sticks of wood so as to force out the blood and cause the meat to be extremely hard.

From thence thy warrant is thy sword."—
"I take thy courtesy, by Heaven,
As freely as 't is nobly given!"—
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

794. *Wreath.* The pile of heath.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

THE COMBAT

Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of War.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain grey.
A wildering path!—they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,

And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gained not the length of horseman's lance.
'T was oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrent down had borne,
And heaped upon the cumbered land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,

The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
"I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."—
"Yet why a second venture try?"—
"A warrior thou, and ask me why!—
Moves our free course by such fixed cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,
The merry glance of mountain maid;
Or if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone."—

V.

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye naught of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar?"—
—"No, by my word;—of bands prepared
To guard King James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung."—
"Free be they flung! for we were loath
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewildered in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?"—
"Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
Naught of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlawed desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight;
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart."—

108. *Regent's court.* A regent is one who rules during the minority of the rightful ruler. John Stuart, Duke of Albany, was regent during the minority of James V. He was not a strong ruler.

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lowered the clans-man's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,—
"And heardst thou why he drew his blade?
Heardst thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What recked the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of Heaven."—
"Still was it outrage;—yet, 't is true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his due;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrowed truncheon of command,
The young King, mewed in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy Chieftain's robber life!—
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruined Lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain,—
Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."—

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answered with disdainful smile,—
"Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I marked thee send delighted eye,

---

119. *Holy-Rood.* See note Canto II, line 221.

126. *The young king, mewed in Stirling tower.* See Introduction, "James V. of Scotland."

Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between:—
These fertile plains, that softened vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fattened steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'—
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds there strays
But one along yon river's maze,—
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
That plundering Lowland field and fold

---

143. *Were once the birthright of the Gael.* See Introduction, "Highlanders and Lowlanders."

Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."—

VIII.

Answered Fitz-James,—"And, if I sought,
Think'st thou no other could be brought?
What deem ye of my path way-laid?
My life given o'er to ambuscade?"—
"As of a meed to rashness due:
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
I seek my hound, or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
Free hadst thou been to come and go;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet for this, even as a spy,
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
Save to fulfil an augury."—
"Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride:
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace; but when I come again,
I come with banner, brand, and bow,

169. *Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu.* "So far indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighboring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the Sassenach, Saxons, or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary." —Scott.

As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his band!"

IX.

"Have, then, thy wish!"—He whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still.
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,

198. *Curlew.* Spelled *curlieu* in the edition of 1830.

Upon the mountain side they hung.
The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"—

X.

Fitz-James was brave:—though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:—
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."—
Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foeman worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand;
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide;

"Come one come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey stone.

XI.

Fitz-James looked round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the Chief replied,
"Fear naught—nay, that I need not say—
But—doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clans-man's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on;—I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."—
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say that now his blood
Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome path-way through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife

271. *Show.* Scott sometimes uses *shew*, the old form of the word.

With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonoured and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanished guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broad-sword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.
And here his course the Chieftain stayed,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said:—

---

301. *On Bochastle the mouldering lines.* Scott tells us that on Bochastle plain there are remains of intrenchments thought to have been Roman.

303. *Eagle wings.* The eagle was the emblem on the standards of the Roman army.

"Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shall feel.
See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Armed like thyself, with single brand;
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."—

XIII.

The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delayed,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay, more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:—
Can naught but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—"No, stranger, none!
And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead;
'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.' "—
"Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
"The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate has solved her prophecy,

Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV.

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—
"Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Not yet prepared?—By heaven! I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet-knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
—"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!—

356. *Carpet knight.* One who had received knighthood kneeling on the carpet of the royal castle, perhaps through personal favoritism of the king, instead of on the battle-field for bravery in action.

Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown.
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clans-men stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again:
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,

380. *Targe.* "A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier."—**Scott.**

The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

"Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"—
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."—
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung:
Received, but recked not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
They tug, they strain! down, down, they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted on his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,

From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

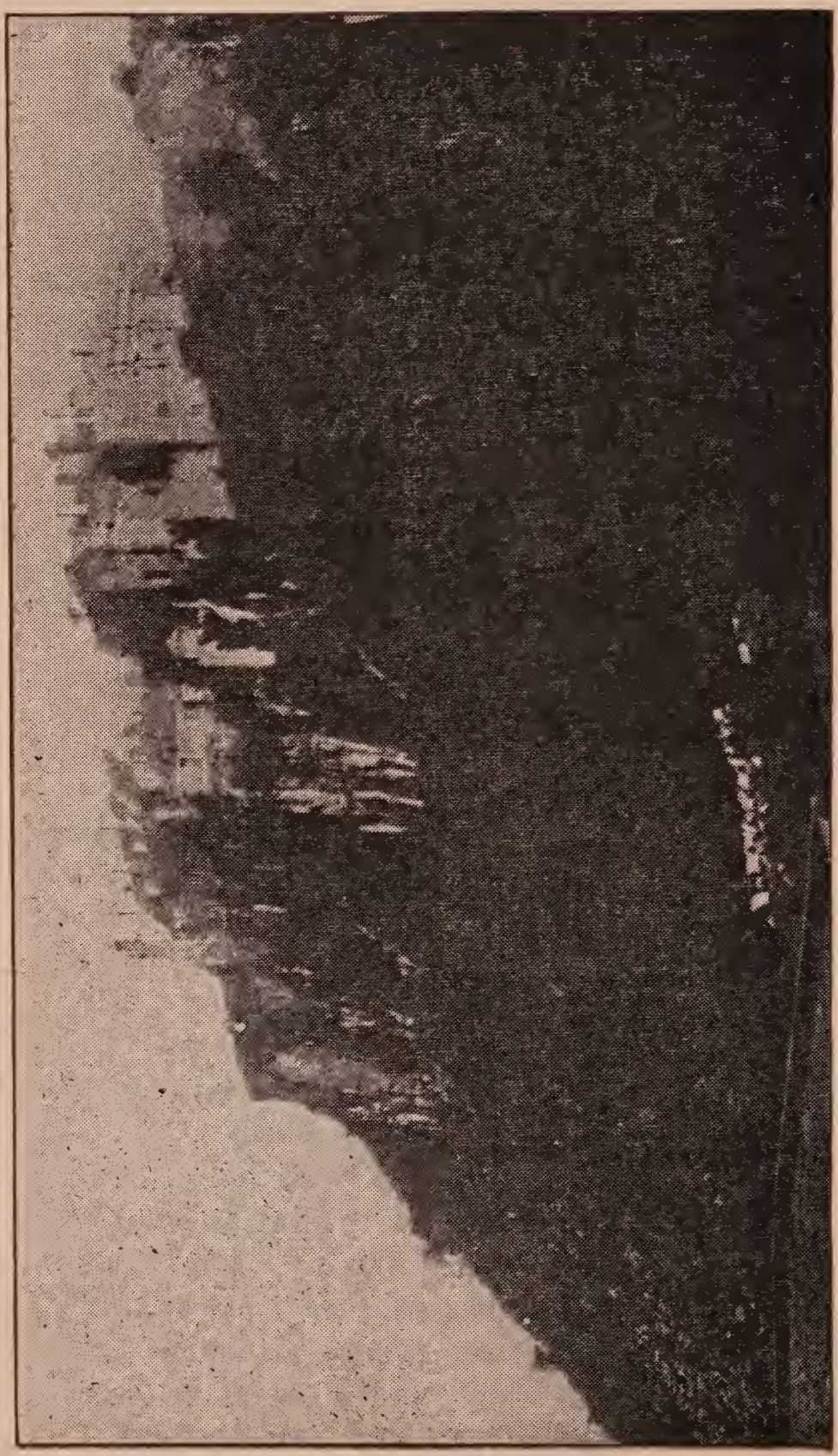
XVII.

He faltered thanks to heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid,—
"Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
Yet with thy foe must die or live,
The praise that Faith and Valour give."—
With that he blew a bugle-note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sat down his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,

By loosened rein, a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse,—
With wonder viewed the bloody spot—
—"Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune,
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

"Stand, Bayard, stand!"—the steed obeyed,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup stayed,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turned on the horse his armed heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then, like a bolt from steel cross-bow
Forth launched, along the plain they go.
They dashed that rapid torrent through,



STIRLING CASTLE.

And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop pricked the Knight,
His merry-men followed as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career looked down.

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
"Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
Who town-ward holds the rocky way,

---

492. *The bannered towers of Doune.* "The ruins of Doune Castle, formerly the residence of the earls of Menteith, now the property of the Earl of Moray, are situated at the confluence of the Ardoch and the Teith."—Scott.

Of stature tall and poor array?
Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain-side?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?"—
"No, by my word;—a burly groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A baron's train would nobly grace.—"
"Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew;
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'T is James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
The uncle of the banished Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his guard;
Douglas and he must meet prepared."—
Then right-hand wheeled their steeds, and straight
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-kenneth's abbey grey,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame:

---

526. *The uncle of the banished Earl.* The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus.

532. *Postern gate.* Rear gate.

A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late!
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven;—
—Be pardoned one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent—but that is by,
And now my business is—to die.
—Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare—for Douglas seeks his doom!
—But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
And see! upon the crowded street,

---

543. *The bride of heaven.* A nun.

550. *A Douglas by his sovereign bled.* "The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand and while under his royal safe conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history."—Scott.

551. *O sad and fatal mound.* "An eminence on the northeast of the Castle (Stirling) where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood."—Scott.

558. *Franciscan steeple.* A church of the order of St. Francis, a Roman Catholic order, founded the early part of the thirteenth century.

In motley groups what masquers meet!
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.
James will be there; he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The highborn tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park,
And play my prize;—King James shall mark
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise."—

XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering draw-bridge rocked and rung,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddle bow,

---

564. *The burghers hold their sports to-day.* "Every burgh of Scotland of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period."—Scott.

Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims.
"Long live the Commons' King, King James!"—
Behind the King thronged peer and knight,
And noble dame and damsel bright.
Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
—But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
And the mean burgher's joys disdained;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banished man,
There thought upon their own grey tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deemed themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

---

594. *The Commons' King.* Scott has explained that one reason for the popularity of James V., for his being called the Commons' King, was his willingness to take part in the popular amusements.

606. *Feudal power.* The feudal lord had power, especially during times of war, to command the services of his vassals.

XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their checkered bands the joyous rout.
There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
His first shaft centred in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

---

614. *Robin Hood.* "The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favorite frolic at such festivals as we are describing."—Scott.

631. "His (the king's) implacability (towards the family of Douglas) did also appear in his carriage towards Archibald of Kilspindie, whom he, when he was a child, loved singularly well for his ability of body, and was wont to call him his Grey-Steill. Archibald, being banished into England, could not well comport with the humour of that nation, which he thought to be too proud, and that they

XXIII.

Now, clear the Ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor called in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;

had too high a conceit of themselves, joined with a contempt and despising of all others. Wherefore, being wearied of that life, and remembering the king's favour of old towards him, he determined to try the king's mercifulness and clemency. So he comes into Scotland, and taking occasion of the king's hunting in the park of Stirling, he casts himself to be in his way, as he was coming home to the castle. So soon as the king saw him afar off, ere he came near, he guessed it was he, and said to one of his courtiers, yonder is my Grey-Steill, Archibald of Kelspindie, if he be alive. The other answered that it could not be he, and that he durst not come into the king's presence. The king approaching, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon, and promised from thenceforward to abstain from meddling in public affairs and to lead a quiet and private life. The king went by without giving him any answer, and trotted a good round pace up the hill. Kilspindie followed, and, though he wore on him a secret, or shirt of mail, for his particular enemies, was as soon at the castle gate as the king. There he sat him down upon a stone without, and entreated some of the king's servants for a cup of drink, being weary and thirsty; but they, fearing the king's displeasure, durst give him none. When the king was set at his dinner, he asked what he had done, what he had said, and whither he had gone? It was told him that he had desired a cup of drink, and had gotten none. The king reproved them very sharply for their discourtesy, and told them, that if he had not taken an oath that no Douglas should ever serve him, he would have received him into his service, for he had seen him sometime a man of great ability.—Hume *of Godscroft*, II,107.

Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppressed;
Indignant then he turned him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-haired sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang,
The King, with look unmoved, bestowed
A purse well filled with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark-grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,

Must to the Douglas blood belong:
The old men marked, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And winked aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wrecked by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmurs rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or called the banished man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honoured place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he, whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known!

XXV.

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free and Bourdeaux wine
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas's side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,

The fleetest hound in all the North,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And, dashing on the antlered prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank.
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and, with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck,
In maiden glee, with garlands deck;
They were such play-mates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darkened brow and flashing eye;—
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamoured loud the royal train,
And brandished swords and staves amain.
But stern the Baron's warning—"Back!

Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
King James, the Douglas, doomed of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war,
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
"Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous Lord!" the Monarch said;
"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know:
But shall a Monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.—
Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
"Break off the sports!" he said, and frowned,
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."—

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marred the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen pricked among the crowd,
Repelled by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,

And slowly scale the path-way steep:
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The Commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said,—
"Sir John of Hyndford! 't was my blade
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed, permit me then
A word with these misguided men.—

XXVIII.

"Hear, gentle friends! ere yet, for me,
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire?
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those cords of love I should unbind,
Which knit my country and my kind?
O no! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red;
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
For me, that mother wails her son;
For me, that widow's mate expires;
For me, that orphans weep their sires;
That patriots mourn insulted laws,

And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"—

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Blessed him who stayed the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs, resigned his honoured charge.

XXX.

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,

RODERICK DHU'S WATCH TOWER

With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
Strained for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hailed the day
When first I broke the Douglas sway;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy king!—

XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar—
What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—
"He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
Within the safe and guarded ground:
For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
Most sure for evil to the throne,—
The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summoned his rebellious crew;
'T is said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand arrayed.
The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
To break their muster marched, and soon
Your grace will hear of battle fought;
But earnestly the Earl besought,

Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride."—

XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
I should have earlier looked to this:
I lost it in this bustling day.
—Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
We do forbid the intended war;
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Bracco; fly!"—
He turned his steed,—"My liege, I hie,—
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broad-swords will be drawn."—
The turf the flying courser spurned,
And to his towers the King returned.

XXXIII.

Ill with King James's mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the saddened town

The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumoured feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms;—the Douglas too,
They mourned him pent within the hold,
"Where stout Earl William was of old,"—
And there his word the speaker stayed,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the Castle pressed;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD-ROOM

I.

The sun, awakening, through the smoky air
  Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
  Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
  Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
  Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
  Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
  Through crowded hospital beholds it stream;
  The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
  The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barred,

---

22. *Sentinel.* Scott used the old form *centinel* here.

The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air,
Deadened the torches' yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blackened stone,
And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deformed with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fevered with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And breakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
Showed in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
Some laboured still their thirst to quench;
Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim
Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,

---

43. *These drew not for their fields the sword.* "The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. * * * James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a bodyguard, called the Foot-Band."—Scott.

To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
Their rolls showed French and German name;
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well trained to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;
In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage, fierce and uncontrolled;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;
Sad burthen to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up started John of Brent,

53. *Fleming.* An inhabitant of Flanders, Belgium.

A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marred the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."—

V.

SOLDIER'S SONG

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?

---

92. *Black-jack.* A drinking can of black leather.
95. *Drink upsees out.* Drink deep.

For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
And 't is right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Stayed in mid-roar the merry shout.
A soldier to the portal went,—
"Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
And,—beat for jubilee the drum!
A maid and minstrel with him come."—
Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarred,
Was entering now the Court of Guard,
A harper with him, and, in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
"What news?" they roared:—"I only know,
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untamable
As the rude mountains where they dwell.
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."—
"But whence thy captives, friend? Such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp:
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp.

103. *Cure.* Office as priest.
103. *Placket and pot.* Women and wine.
104. *Lurch.* Deceive.

Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band."—

VII.

"No, comrade;—no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."—
"Hear ye his boast!" cried John of Brent,
Ever to strife and jangling bent;
"Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?
I'll have my share howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."—
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepped between,
And dropped at once the tartan screen:—
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May, through summer tears.
The savage soldiery, amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;
Even hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke,—"Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend;
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the strong,
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."—
Answered De Brent, most forward still
In every feat or good or ill,—
"I shame me of the part I played:
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,"
He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
"Must bear such age, I think, as thou.—
Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall:
There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart!—
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."—

IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant young,—
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung),
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.

The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
"Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
Her dark eye flashed;—she paused and sighed,—
"O what have I to do with pride!—
—Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."—

X.

The signet-ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and altered look;
And said,—"This ring our duties own;
And, pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower

Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way."—
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold;—
"Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar."—
With thanks,—'t was all she could,—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:—
"My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the Chief's birth begins our care;

Our harp must soothe the infant heir,
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our verse,—
A doleful tribute!—o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right—deny it not!"—
"Little we reck," said John of Brent,
"We Southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name—a word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer,
More than to guide the labouring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."—

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they passed, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many an hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
By artists formed, who deemed it shame

And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They entered:—'t was a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor
Such as the rugged days of old
Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
Till the Leech visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."—
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering Minstrel looked, and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fevered limbs he threw

In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat;—
O! how unlike her course at sea!
Or his free step on hill and lea!—
Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
—"What of thy lady?—of my clan?—
My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
Have they been ruined in my fall?
Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here!
Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear."—
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too.)—
"Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;—
Some might,—for they had lost their Chief.
Who basely live?—who bravely died?"—
"O, calm thee, Chief!" the Minstrel cried,
"Ellen is safe";—"For that, thank Heaven!"—
"And hopes are for the Douglas given;—
The Lady Margaret too is well,
And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told,
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent."—

XIV.

The Chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequered his swarthy brow and cheeks.
—"Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,

With measure bold, on festal day,
In yon lone isle . . . again where ne'er
Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst),
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soared from battle-fray."—
The trembling Bard with awe obeyed,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witnessed from the mountain-height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awakened the full power of song,
And bore him in career along;—
As shallop launched on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV.

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE

"The Minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!—
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake,
Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
The sun's retiring beams?
—I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star,
Wave o'er the head of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!

Battle of Beal' an Duine. "A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V."—Scott.

To hero boune for battle-strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'T were worth ten years of peaceful life,
One glance at their array!

XVI.

"Their light-armed archers far and near
Surveyed the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frowned,
Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
The stern battalia crowned.
No cymbal clashed, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
That shadowed o'er their road.
Their vaward scouts no tiding bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirred the roe;
The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High-swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is passed, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spear-men pause,
While to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their flight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broad-swords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spear-men's twilight wood?
—'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!'
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levelled low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
—'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'—

XVIII.

"Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,

Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broad-sword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurled them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering crash,
I heard the broad-sword's deadly clang,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
As if an hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheeled his rear-ward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,—
—'My banner-man, advance!
I see,' he cried, 'their column shake.—
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!'—
The horsemen dashed among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
Where, where was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men!
And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was poured;
Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanished the mountain sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,

As the dark caverns of the deep
  Suck the whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within.
—Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issues wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
Grey Benvenue I soon repassed,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
  The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
    The lowering scowl of heaven
  An inky hue of livid blue
    To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk again.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge,
Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel-ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
  Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
  The martial flood disgorged again,
    But not in mingled tide;

The plaided warriors of the North
High on the mountain thunder forth,
And overhang its side;
While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shattered band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tattered sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havoc of the day.

XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'T is there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile;—
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
And loose a shallop from the shore.
Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
Lord of his mate, and brood, and den.'—
Forth from the ranks a spear-man sprung,
On earth his casque and corselet rung,
He plunged him in the wave:—
All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
And to their clamours Benvenue

530. *Havoc.* In the edition of 1830 this word is spelled *havock.*

ELLEN'S ISLE, LOCH KATRINE AND BENVENUE

A mingled echo gave;
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'T was then, as by the outcry riven,
Poured down at once the lowering heaven;
A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
Her billows reared their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
For round him showered, mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
In vain.—He nears the isle—and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame,
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleamed in her hand;—
It darkened,—but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spear-man floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

" 'Revenge! revenge!' the Saxons cried,
The Gael's exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,

Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold."—
—But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy:
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length, no more his deafened ear
The minstrel melody can hear;
His face grows sharp,—his hands are clenched,
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fixed on vacancy;—
Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!—
Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit passed;
But when he saw that life was fled,
He poured his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

LAMENT

"And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,

Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say?
—For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honoured Pine!

"What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.—
O woe for Alpine's honoured Pine!

"Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured Pine."—

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,
Where played, with many-coloured gleams,

613. *Bothwell,* Douglas.

Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lightened up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or, if she looked, 't was but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra crouching by her side,
Her station claimed with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.—
Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woeful hour?
'T was from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

638. *Storied pane.* Colored glass, the designs suggesting stories.

XXIV.

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and blood-hound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

"I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sun-beams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.

"No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
That life is lost to love and me!"—

---

665. *Tired of perch and hood.* The hawk was tired of idleness. It was blinded by a hood when it was not being used in the hunt.

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The listener had not turned her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"——"Oh say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come!—'t is more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."—
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI.

Within 't was brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;

It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing stayed;
A few faint steps she forward made.
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought, who owned this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring.—
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands,—
She showed the ring—she clasped her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous Prince, that suppliant look!

Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed:—
"Yes, fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask naught for Douglas;—yester even,
His Prince and he have much forgiven:
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
We would not to the vulgar crowd
Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided and our laws.
I stanched thy father's death-feud stern,
With stout De Vaux and grey Glencairn;
And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our Throne.—
But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?—
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."—

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye

On Nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepped between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 't is my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.—
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'T is under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
Then in a tone apart and low,
—"Ah, little traitress! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!"—
Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"—

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guessed
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness, there came
A lightening of her fears for Graeme,

791. *Thus watch I o'er insulted laws.* See Introduction, "James V. of Scotland."

And more she deemed the Monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
Rebellious broad-sword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.—
"Forbear thy suit:—the King of Kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings,
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand:—
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!—
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"—
Blushing, she turned her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek.—
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.—
Malcolm, come forth!"—and, at the word,
Down kneeled the Graeme to Scotland's Lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlawed man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.—
Fetters and warder for the Graeme!"—
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with Nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone.
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'T is now a Seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 't is silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!

Glossary

abbess—a superior or governess of a nunnery
ambuscade—a concealed station where enemies lie in wait to surprise
anathema—a curse; a ban
antlered—having branched horns
apparition—a ghost; a specter; a phantom
apprehensive—fearful
archery—the art of shooting with bow and arrows
architect—a person who plants or designs buildings
ardent—stirring; fervent; impassioned
arraignment—an accusation; a denouncement
askance—sideways
assuage—to calm; to soothe
athwart—across
atone—to make amends for; to reconcile
augur—to predict; to foretell
augury—a prediction; a foretelling; the ceremony used to foretell events
auspicious—favorable
baffled—deceived; cheated
ban—a curse
banditti—highwaymen; robbers
bard—a poet; a minstrel
bark—a boat
baron—a nobleman
barret-cap—an ancient flat military cap
battalia—an army in battle array
batten—to fatten
beaker—a goblet; a cup
beetle—to extend; to overhang
beguile—to deceive
beshrew—to wish ill to; to curse mildly
bier—the framework for holding a coffin
bittern—a species of heron
bland—gentle; mild
blasphemy—profanity
blast—to destroy
blench—to shrink back; to flinch

blithe—joyous; gay
boding—foretelling evil; foreboding
bonnet-piece—a coin of James V. of Scotland bearing the figure of the king's head wearing a bonnet
boon—n. a favor. adj. kind; bountiful
bootless—profitless; useless
bosky—wooded
boss—a projection
boune—prepared; ready
bourgeon—to sprout
bourne—a boundary
bout—a battle; a fit of drunkenness or revelry
bracken—a fern
brae—a bank; a hillside; a slope
brake—a thicket; a kind of fern
brawl—a quarrel; a row
brooch—a gold ornamental pin (brooch)
brook—to endure; to bear
broom—a shrub of the bean family having long, slender green branches and showy yellow flowers
bulwark—a fortification; a projection
burgher—a townsman
burnished—shining
burthen—a burden; a subject
butt—a large wine cask. In archery, a target
buxom—lively
cabara—mysteries
cadence—rhythm
cairn—a heap of stones
caitiff—a wretch
canna—cotton grass
casque—a helmet
catch—a part song
cavil—to make frivolous objections to
chalice—a goblet; a cup
chanter—the finger-pipe of the bagpipe
chaplet—a wreath; a garland
chase—a hunt
chide—to reprove; to scold
chisel—a tool used in shaping wood, stone, etc.

chivalry—knighthood
churlish—surly; sullen
clan—a group comprising a number of families, the heads of which claim descent from a common ancestor
claymore—a large two-edged sword used by the Scottish Highlanders
cleave—to part or separate, as by cutting
cloister—a monastery, convent or other similar establishment
clemency—mercy; the disposition to forgive
cognizance—a knightly emblem
coif—a close-fitting cap or kerchief tied about the head
coil—confusion; tumult
collation—a light meal
conceit—a fanciful idea
conjure—to charge or call upon in a sacred name; to entreat
copse—a thicket or grove of small trees
cormorant—a kind of sea bird which devours fish
coronach—a funeral song
coronet—a crown; a wreath
correi—"The hollow side of a hill where game usually lies" —Scott
corselet—a breastplate
courier—a swift messenger
courser—a swift or spirited horse
covert—a hiding place
cower—to crouch tremblingly
cowl—a monk's hood
crest—the helmet decoration of a knight; the ridge of the neck of an animal; a roof ornament; a coat-of-arms
cubit—about eighteen inches
cumber—n. trouble; difficulty. v. to hinder
cupola—a small structure on the top of a roof of a building originally used as a look-out
curlew—a bird of the snipe family
damosel—the old form of damsel, meaning girl or maiden
debauch—an indulgence in drinking
deemed—thought; considered
deign—to condescend

dingle—a narrow valley
dirge—a song expressing grief or mourning
dirk—a dagger
disdainful—scornful
disembodied—having no body
dispensation—a release from obedience to certain laws
doe—a female deer
dross—waste; refuse
dun—a yellowish- or grayish-brown color
eglantine—the sweetbrier
emblem—a symbol; an image
embossed—covered
emprise—an adventure; an enterprise
enchantress—one who charms
enow—enough
enthusiast—an ardent, imaginative person
envenomed—poisoned
erne—a sea eagle
errant—wandering
espial—the act of spying
essay—to try
estranged—to become as strangers; withdrawn
execration—a curse
expire—to die
eyry—an eagle's nest
fagot—a bundle of sticks for fuel
fain—gladly
falchion—a broad-bladed sword, slightly curved
falcon—a hawk used for hunting
fallow—n. cleared woodland. adj. pale yellow
fane—a church; an abbey
fantastic—fanciful
favor—a token
fawn—a young deer
fay—a fairy
fealty—loyalty; faithfulness
feint—to make a mock attack on one part when another part is the real object of attack
fell—n. a mountain. adj. cruel; inhuman
fen—low swampy land

festal—joyous; keeping holiday
fetter—a shackle
feud—a quarrel; strife
fidelity—faithfulness; loyalty
fieldfare—a medum-sized European thrush
filial—of or pertaining to a son or daughter
flagon—a vessel for liquors usually with handle and spout
flecked—streaked; spotted
foiled—defeated; outwitted
foray—a raid
frantic—violent; insane
frigate—a ship; a boat
gauntlet—a glove; the steel glove of the armor
girdled—encircled
glaive—a sword
glee-maiden—a woman minstrel
glozing—flattering
goading—exciting; irritating
goss-hawk, goshawk—a large, short-winged hawk noted for activity and courage
Gothic—a style of architecture common from about 1160 to 1530, characterized by pointed arches, teep roofs, and relatively great height
Grace—one of the three beautiful sister goddesses
grot—a cave
guerdon—reward
guileless—artless; frank
guise—manner; aspect
gyve—a shackle; a fetter
halberd—a long-handled weapon no longer in use
hallowed—made sacred; consecrated
hamlet—a village
harness—armor
havoc—destruction
hazard—risk; peril
heath—the evergreen shrub found on the heath; open level land usually covered with evergreen shrubs
heather—an evergreen shrub
henchman—the "gillie" or "right-hand man" of a Scottish chieftain; "a trusted follower and supporter"—Scott.

hermit—one who lives in solitude
hind—the female of the red deer
homicide—a manslayer; the killing of any human being by another
imbrue—to moisten; to drench
impending—threatening
imprecation—a curse
incessant—unceasing; continuous; constant
incumbent—overhanging
infamy—dishonor
infidel—one lacking faith
infringe—to violate; to trespass; to encroach
instinctive—natural
insulated—set apart; isolated
inured—accustomed; hardened
invulnerable—incapable of receiving injury
ire—anger; wrath
jack—a medieval coat of mail made of two thicknesses of leather or cloth and padded
jennet—a small Spanish horse
jeopardy—hazard; danger
juniper—an evergreen shrub or small tree of the pine family
ken—sight
kern—a peasant
lackey—to act as servant to
lair—a bed; a couch
lave—to bathe; to wash
lay—a song; a poem
layman—one not of the clergy
leech—a physician; a surgeon
licentious—lawless; immoral
lichen—a dark, dry-looking plant found growing on trees, rocks, etc.
limpid—clear
lineage—race; family
linn—a waterfall; a cataract
linnet—a small singing bird
loiterer—one slow in moving
loop—a small, narrow opening; a loophole

lurch—embarrassment
lyre—a stringed musical instrument, resembling a harp and having, usually, seven strings
maniac—a violently insane person
marring—spoiling; ruining
marauding—plundering; robbing
martial—warlike
matin—n. a morning prayer. adj. morning
mavis—a thrush
mead—a desert
meet—fitting; appropriate
menial—n. a servant. adj. servile
mere—a lake
merle—a blackbird
mewed—confined
mien—bearing; air
mimicry—imitation
minaret—a tower
minion—favorite (sometimes used scornfully)
moat—a defensive ditch on the outside of a castle or fortress wall
morrica-dance, morris-dance—an old fashioned rustic dance in England in which the performers took the part of Robin Hood and other characters in English folk-lore
mosque—a Mohammedan place of worship
muster—to come together; to assemble
mute—silent
Naiad—one of the nymphs believed to inhabit the lakes, rivers, springs and fountains
nice—exact
niggard—a stingy person; a miser
nuptial—a marriage; a wedding
nymph—a goddess of the forest
obscure—v. to conceal; to hide. adj. unknown, not clear
odious—hateful
omen—a sign; an augury
onset—an attack
orison—a prayer
osier—a willow
pageant—n. a display; a show. adj. spectacular

pagod, pagoda—a temple having many towers
palfrey—a saddle horse
pall—a rich cloth
parley—a talk; a conference
patriarch—a father and ruler
penance—repentance; grief
pennon—a flag; a banner; a wing
petty—trifling; inconsiderable
phantom—a ghost; a specter
pibroch—bagpipe music, usually warlike
pillage—plundering
pinions—wings
pinnacle—a spire; a lofty peak
plaid—a rectangular cloth, usually of tartan, worn by both sexes of Scotland instead of a cloak
plover—a short bird having a short bill
pomp—display; splendor
portico—a kind of porch
precipitate—sudden, abrupt
preface—something introductory or preliminary
prelude—an introduction
presage—to foretell; to predict
presumption—boldness; arrogance
pretext—a reason given to conceal the true one
prick—to ride with spurs
primeval—belonging to the first ages
promontory—a high point of land or rock projecting into the sea
proselyte—one who has been won over to a belief or creed
prowling—searching about stealthily
ptarmigan—a kind of grouse having white plumage in winter and dark in summer
purvey—to furnish; to supply
quarry—game; the object of the chase
quarterstaff—a staff formerly used as a weapon
questing—hunting
rampart—an embankment
reave—to sweep away; to plunder; to rob
recompense—a reward
recreant—a cowardly wretch

reft—robbed
refluent—flowing back
reluctant—unwilling
rendezvous—a meeting-place
repining—complaining; sorrowing
requiem—a musical service or hymn in honor of the dead
retribution—punishment
reveillé—a signal by bugle or drum at sunrise to call soldiers to the day's duties
revelry—merriment
rite—a ceremony
ritual—a ceremony
roe—a small deer, hind or doe
roebuck—a male deer
rood—a cross; a crucifix
rout—a disorderly gathering
rowan—a tree having white flowers and red berries, usually called the mountain ash
russet—reddish- or yellowish-brown
ruthless—pitiless
sable—black
sack—wine
sage—wise
satyr—a deity or demigod of the forest, part man and part horse or goat
scabbard—a sheath for a sword or dagger
scathe—n. severe injury; harm; danger. v. to scar; to scar
scatheless—free from harm
scaur—a cliff
sedgy—marshy and densely covered with grass-like herbs
seer—one who foretells events
semblance—a likeness
sentient—feeling
sequestered—secluded; isolated; set apart
serf—a member of the lowest peasant class
serried—pressed together; crowded
shallow—a shallow place in a body of water
shallop—a light, open boat
shingle—coarse gravel
shrewdly—sharply; keenly

signet—a seal
simperer—one who smiles in a silly or affected manner
slake—to quench; to extinguish; to cool
snood—a band worn around the hair by young, unmarried women in Scotland
sooth—n. truth. adj. truthful
spectre—a ghost; a phantom
spell—a charm; words supposed to have magic power
spleen—anger; ill humor
spontaneous—natural; coming without effort
squadron—a body of troops drawn up in a square
stanch—n. a foundation. adj. loyal; steadfast
strath—a wide, open valley
strathspey—a lively Scottish dance, like a reel
strand—the shore
streight—difficulty
subterranean—underground
suppliant—one who pleads
sylvan—of the woods; rustic
symbol—a sign; an emblem
symphony—a harmony of sounds
talisman—a charm
target—a shield; a buckler
tartan—woolen cloth, checkered or crossbarred with bands of various colors, much worn in the Scottish Highlands
tilter—one who uses a lance in combat
timorous—timid
toil—a net; a snare
troll—to sing in a free, hearty manner
trophy—a memorial of victory
troth—truth; faith
trow—to believe; to trust
truce—an armistice; a time during which fighting is stopped by agreement
truncheon—a baton of command or authority
turret—a tower
unfathomable—unmeasurable
unrequited—not returned
unwonted—unaccustomed

upbraiding—blaming; reproaching
vair—a kind of squirrel skin much used in the fourteenth century as trimming for costly dresses
vassal—one who has promised homage and loyalty to another in return for protection
vaward—situated in the front
veering—winding
vehemence—eagerness; violence
verdant—green
vesper—an evening prayer
vicar—a priest; a clergyman
vindictive—revengeful
visage—the face
void—empty; being without
votaress—one devoted to some service
ward—n. guardianship; keeping. v. to guard; to protect
warder—a keeper; a guard; a sentinel
weal—safety
weeds—garments
whinyard—a short sword
wily—tricky; crafty
wizard—adj. magical; enchanting. n. a man supposed to have supernatural powers
wonèd—dwelled
wold—a forest
wot—to know
wreak—to revenge
yeoman—an attendant
yore—long ago
zeal—eagerness; enthusiasm

Suggestions to Teachers

The Lady of the Lake was written to be enjoyed. As Scott himself has told us that his appeal is to "young people of bold and active dispositions," surely any presentation of the poem from which a class of ninth graders has not derived pleasure will have been a failure.

Once the pupil has entered into the spirit of the narrative, the study of the poem offers little difficulty. It is, however, sometimes a bit difficult to start a group of first year high school pupils in such way that they will interpret the stanzas readily and derive both understanding and enjoyment from their reading. If pupils are to gain in literary appreciation they must themselves become the interpreters. It will not do, then, for them to rely upon the instructor's reading aloud the narrative to them, they having been relieved of all responsibility in the matter.

For that reason the questions listed below are given, with the suggestion that a number of stanzas, the number to be determined by the pupils' ability, be assigned for class preparation. The class period should then be spent in a discussion of the events, ideas, descriptions, etc., to which the questions have directed attention, and then in an appreciative reading aloud, by the instructor or some members of the class who read well, of the stanzas assigned and discussed. The class period should never be turned into a mere exercise in oral reading. It is generally, of course, con-

ceded that a part of the appeal of any poem is to the ear, and if full appreciation is to be received, this fact must be considered; but a stumbling, halting, unappreciative reading will serve not to increase but to kill the pleasure the oral reading should give.

As the introductory stanzas mean little to the average ninth grade pupil until they have been explained, it would perhaps be best for the instructor to read those aloud with her group before any assignment has been made. They serve to put the readers into the right mood for what is to follow.

The historical background must be understood before the poem is read. That part of the *Introduction* entitled *Highlanders and Borderers* and *James V. of Scotland* will probably give all the information which is necessary although it would be desirable for the teacher to supplement it with stories from her own reading.

The glossary is intended to furnish explanations of the many words Scott has used which have almost or entirely passed out of usage and also of those other words which may not be a part of the vocabulary of a first year high school pupil. The glossary can be more conveniently used than could a dictionary, and its use should be encouraged and, if necessary, insisted upon. All use of the glossary and of the notes, (which have been placed for the pupils' convenience, at the bottom of the pages containing the terms explained), should be a part of the preparation and of the discussion preceding the reading of the

poem. Once the oral reading of *The Chase* has begun it would be disastrous, of course, to interrupt the flight of the stag or the pursuit of the huntsman for the explanation of a difficult term.

Many passages of *The Lady of the Lake* lend themselves excellently to dramatization. Usually boys and girls enjoy this type of work. If enjoyment is derived from it, a part of the class time may well be spent in this way. To be able to impersonate, one must understand the character impersonated, and character evaluation is a first essential in literary appreciation.

The dramatization project may be as simple or as extensive as the instructor and her group wish. It may consist merely of an oral reading of assigned portions, the pupils taking the parts of the characters, or it may consist of a production suitable for presentation on the school stage. The latter form of project would include the memorizing of parts, adequate costuming, and some attempt at stage scenery. It would also necessitate dividing the poem into acts and scenes, or, perhaps, into six reels, as of a motion picture, the divisions corresponding to the six cantos. As not all of the events are related by means of dialogue, the intervening narrative, as well as the descriptive and expository parts, would have to be worked out and presented in brief but effective summary, to be given between the acts or reels.

The teacher may decide, because of lack of time, to take advantage of both individual and group study. The recitation period, dramatization projects, and study hall periods may be util-

ized for group activities. Home study should be individual. It may prove feasible to assign portions of the story for recitation and group discussion, and other portions to be read outside the class periods. The story can be kept moving rapidly in this way. A few moments of review at the beginning of each class period will serve to link together the parts of the plot.

The notebook prepared for the study of literature by the general editors of this series will be of value in checking or testing the individual work.

Objective tests have been prepared upon *The Lady of the Lake* by the general editors. They save the teacher's time, give the pupil a definite measure of his knowledge of the classic, and provide the beginner (both teacher and pupil) a measure of values. If the teacher will read over the objective test before she begins to teach this classic, the question of what to teach will be partly solved for her, because the printed test will sharpen her eyes and stimulate her imagination.

Some of the varied suggestions in other units of this series are worth the attention of the teacher. See the "Suggestions to Teachers" in *Silas Marner*, *The Idylls of the King*, and *Treasure Island*.

Questions For Study

Biography, History and Criticism

1. Why was Sir Walter Scott especially well fitted to write a story like *The Lady of the Lake?*
2. What kind of man was Scott?
3. Name five of his other works.
4. Is the story a true one?
5. What may the poet or novelist give us which the historian could not give?
6. What were the reasons for the constantly recurring feuds between the Highlanders and the Borderers?
7. Describe the dress of the Highlanders.
8. Tell what you can of their manner of fighting.
9. Explain what is meant by a clan.
10. What were some of the fine traits of the Highlanders?
11. In what ways did the Borderers differ from the Highlanders?
12. How did James V. happen to fall into the control of the Douglas family?
13. How did he escape this control?
14. Describe some of the personal traits of James V.
15. Why did he go about his country in disguise?
16. How did he succeed in quelling the Borderers and the Highlanders?
17. When and how did James V. die?

18. Judging from the three introductory stanzas, what kind of story do you think *The Lady of the Lake* is? Why?
19. What was Scott's purpose in writing *The Lady of the Lake?*
20. What is the setting of the poem?
21. When are the events of the story supposed to have taken place?

Canto First

1. Trace on the map the flight of the stag and the pursuit of the hunters.
2. Tell, in as interesting a manner as you can, the story of the chase.
3. Describe Loch Katrine as the Hunter first saw it.
4. Describe Ellen as she first appears in the story.
5. Relate briefly the conversation between Ellen and the Huntsman.
6. Describe Ellen's home to which she took the stranger.
7. What happened as the stranger crossed the threshold of the lodge?
8. Who was Lady Margaret? How was she related to Ellen?
9. How was the stranger entertained at the lodge?
10. What suggestions do you receive from the Hunter's dreams of his past life? What of his present attitude toward Ellen?
11. Quote ten, or more, lines of this Canto which have pleased you.

Canto Second

1. Who was Allan-bane? What were his duties?
2. What are the wishes expressed in the song the minstrel sang as the stranger departed?
3. How did Ellen feel toward the stranger? Why does she scold herself for these feelings?
4. What happened when Ellen asked Allan-bane to sing the praises of Malcolm Graeme? What does this sugest to you about the story to follow? Is Ellen distressed by this happening?
5. Who is Sir Roderick? Characterize him. How does he feel toward Ellen? What is her attitude toward him?
6. Describe the home-coming of Roderick and his men.
7. Describe the meeting of Ellen and her father.
8. What news has Roderick brought his family?
9. What does he propose to the Douglas as the best way out of their difficulty? What answer does he receive?
10. How many characters of the story do you now know? Characterize each.
11. What complications have entered into the plot?
12. Quote the lines of this Canto which you have memorized.

Canto Third

1. Describe the manner in which the Highland

chieftains summoned the members of their clans for war.

2. What were some of the powers attributed to Brian, the Hermit?
3. Tell of some of the interesting Highland and Celtic superstitions to which Scott has referred.
4. Describe the ceremony through which the clansmen went in preparing the Fiery Cross for its journey.
5. Trace for yourself a map of the route taken by the bearers of the cross.
6. Are the scenes to which the bearers of the cross came effective? Why?
7. Describe the retreat to which Ellen and her father had come. Tell what you can about it.
8. Were Roderick's words in lines 748-749 true?
9. Do you like the songs interspersed in this Canto? Which do you like best? Does the meter of the songs differ from that of the main part of the poem? What is the meter of each? What is the rhyme scheme?
10. Quote the lines memorized from Canto Third.

Canto Fourth

1. Retell the conversation between Malise and Norman, being careful to explain in detail the Taghairm.
2. What was the prophecy which came to the hermit?
3. What is your answer to line 170?
4. Where does Ellen think her father has gone?

5. Tell the story of the ballad which Allan sings, trying to cheer Ellen. Why did he choose this ballad? Is Ellen as brave as Alice Brand?
6. Describe the second meeting of Ellen with the stranger. Why has he returned? What are her fears for him?
7. What gift does Fitz-James give Ellen as he leaves and with what promise? Is it likely that she will make use of it?
8. Describe the woman whom Fitz-James meets on the mountain path.
9. What does her first song tell you about her life?
10. Why does she feel kindly toward Fitz-James?
11. How do you interpret her next song? What result did her warning have?
12. Describe the meeting between Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu. What do you know of Scottish laws of hospitality?
13. Quote the lines of this Canto which you have memorized.

Canto Fifth

1. What does the introductory stanza tell you of the events to follow in this Canto?
2. Retell the conversation between Roderick Dhu and James Fitz-James.
3. Is there any reason other than Scott's love of this country for the descriptive passages given in the early part of this Canto?
4. Describe the combat between the two men.
5. Which was the braver and the more gener-

ous, Roderick Dhu or James Fitz-James? Give reasons for your opinion.

6. Where does the climax of the poem occur? Why do you think so?
7. Why has Douglas come to Stirling? What does he find taking place on that day? What does he first decide to do?
8. What is the attitude of the people toward James V? Is this true to history?
9. Describe each of the contests in which Douglas took part. What prizes did he win and how were they awarded?
10. What disturbance did Ellen's dog cause and what was the result?
11. Explain the King's speech to Lennox, lines 818-835. Have others found his words to be true?
12. With what circumstance does the Canto close? Where have you left each of the main characters?
13. Quote the lines memorized.

Canto Sixth

1. What pictures does the song with which the Canto opens suggest?
2. Describe the Guard Room scene of the first four stanzas.
3. How was Ellen received by the soldiers?
4. What effect did the sight of the ring given Ellen by Fitz-James have on Lewis?
5. What was the reason for the error made in taking Allan to Roderick's room instead of to Douglas's?

6. What figure is used in stanza XIII to describe the appearance of Roderick Dhu? Is it effective?
7. Did you notice how effectively the minstrel told the story of the battle to Roderick? How is the nature background made to fit in with the events? Retell the story.
8. What tributes does Allan pay to Roderick in the *Lament?* Are they deserved?
9. Why has Malcolm been made a prisoner?
10. Is Ellen well able to understand Malcolm's song? Why?
11. Describe the closing scene of the poem. How did Ellen first realize that James Fitz-James was James V.? How was Allan's dream, Canto Fourth, lines 221-222, made to come true?
12. Are the three concluding stanzas necessary? Why? (Reread the introductory stanzas Canto First.)
13. Quote the lines memorized.

The Poem as a Whole

1. Why did Scott write *The Lady of the Lake?* Did he succeed in his purpose?
2. To what type of poetry does the poem belong? Explain.
3. What is the meter of the main part of the poem? Of the introductory stanzas?
4. How does the poem rhyme?
5. How does the ballad given in Canto Fourth differ in meter and rhyme scheme from the main narrative?

6. What is the setting of the story? Was Scott familiar with the country described?
7. During what century are the events of the story supposed to have taken place?
8. What parts of the story are true? Which characters are fictitious?
9. Name the important characters. Give a characterization of each.
10. Retell the story of each Canto trying to use not more than three sentences for the events of a single Canto.
11. How much time elapses from the opening of Canto First to the closing of Canto Sixth?
12. What value have you gained from your study of this poem?